



University of HUDDERSFIELD

University of Huddersfield Repository

Simpson, Connor

Blockade in Britain: the fluctuating influence of international law on political and public opinion
1899 – 1919

Original Citation

Simpson, Connor (2021) Blockade in Britain: the fluctuating influence of international law on political and public opinion 1899 – 1919. Masters thesis, University of Huddersfield.

This version is available at <http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/id/eprint/35770/>

The University Repository is a digital collection of the research output of the University, available on Open Access. Copyright and Moral Rights for the items on this site are retained by the individual author and/or other copyright owners. Users may access full items free of charge; copies of full text items generally can be reproduced, displayed or performed and given to third parties in any format or medium for personal research or study, educational or not-for-profit purposes without prior permission or charge, provided:

- The authors, title and full bibliographic details is credited in any copy;
- A hyperlink and/or URL is included for the original metadata page; and
- The content is not changed in any way.

For more information, including our policy and submission procedure, please contact the Repository Team at: E.mailbox@hud.ac.uk.

<http://eprints.hud.ac.uk/>

Blockade in Britain: the fluctuating influence of
international law on political and public opinion 1899 –
1919

By Connor Simpson

U1762076

MA By Research History

University of Huddersfield

September 2021

Abstract

The history of the Allied blockade of Germany and Central Europe is one of controversy, debate, and complexity. Even before its installation in 1914 there had been large-scale national and international debates over whether blockade and purposeful targeting of civilians was justified during war. These debates were the subject of deliberation for numerous public, politic, and extra-parliamentary groups from 1899-1919 including legal scholars, politicians, women's groups, and naval officers. One of the most prominent influences upon these opinions was that of international law – this influence is the focus of this thesis.

At the turn of the twentieth-century international law was a growing force fast approaching its potential apex. Following on from the First Hague Conference in 1899, the planned Second Hague Conference in 1907 sought to establish the basis of all future international law. The Second Conference also led to the establishment of the London Naval Conference 1908-9 which sought to establish and codify international law over the use of blockade and other maritime warfare. Throughout these Conferences the influence of international law on British public and political opinion was substantial. The influence of international law continued to exert its pressure on British public and political opinion up to and past the outbreak of war in 1914. However, faith in international law in Britain waned under the pressures of war, leading to its abandonment in 1919 with the announcement of the blockades extension past hostilities and it was replaced by alternative concepts of humanitarianism centred on international solidarity, sisterhood and peace. This thesis explores this growth and fall of international law and argues that as the war progressed faith in international law was replaced with faith in humanitarianism. This thesis makes use of the current historiography surrounding international law, blockade, British press, and propaganda to inform this argument. It also makes extensive use of thus far neglected newspaper articles from the period in order to expand on the current historiography.

Contents

| | |
|--|-----|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Chapter 1- An Introduction to Blockades, International Law and Public Opinion..... | 14 |
| The First Hague Conference..... | 24 |
| The Second Hague Conference..... | 32 |
| The London Naval Conference and the Declaration of London..... | 39 |
| Chapter 2- The Blockade 1914-1918: Managing a Blockade, Opposing a Blockade and the Effects of a Blockade..... | 48 |
| Pre-war Debates on the Declaration of London..... | 54 |
| The Outbreak of War 1914..... | 64 |
| The Continuation of Failures 1915..... | 67 |
| The Year of Change 1916 | 70 |
| 1917 The Turning Point..... | 76 |
| 1918 The End of Fighting but not Blockade..... | 80 |
| Chapter 3: 1919 The Continuation of a Peacetime Blockade and the Growth of Opposition..... | 83 |
| Methodology for Selections of Primary Sources..... | 87 |
| The Historiography of 1919..... | 90 |
| The Blockade by Millicent Garrett Fawcett | 97 |
| The Blockade. Liberals Women’s Pleas for Germany..... | 101 |
| “Raise The Blockade” Leaflets. National Press Fined..... | 105 |
| Conclusion..... | 110 |
| Bibliography | 114 |

Copyright Statement

i. The author of this thesis (including any appendices and/ or schedules to this thesis) owns any copyright in it (the “Copyright”) and s/he has given The University of Huddersfield the right to use such Copyright for any administrative, promotional, educational and/or teaching.

ii. Copies of this thesis, either in full or in extracts, may be made only in accordance with the regulations of the University Details of these regulations may be obtained from the Librarian. Details of these regulations may be obtained from the Librarian. This page must form part of any such copies made.

iii. The ownership of any patents, designs, trademarks and any and all other intellectual property rights except for the Copyright (the “Intellectual Property Rights”) and any reproductions of copyright works, for example graphs and tables (“Reproductions”), which may be described in this thesis, may not be owned by the author and may be owned by third Such Intellectual Property Rights and Reproductions cannot and must not be made available for use without permission of the owner(s) of the relevant Intellectual Property Rights and/or Reproductions.

Introduction

The blockade of Germany during the Great War is without question one of the most interesting aspects of the conflict. The blockade and economic warfare against Germany was Britain's decisive strategy for winning the war, with France and Russia possessing large armies capable of winning the land war Britain relayed more heavily on its navy.¹ Britain possessed 'the world's largest navy, the world's greatest merchant fleet, and the world's strongest financial, industrial and economic power base.'² With such strengths it was logical that Britain would wage a war on Germany's economic capabilities and, in 1914, when war broke out that is exactly what it did. From the onset of the war, Britain used its navy to blockade Germany, seizing its merchant ships, stopping the trade of neutral nations supplying Germany and using its diplomatic power to pressure others to cease trade with Germany.³ Although slow to take effect, by the end of the war the blockade was devastating. Germany's economy was strangled by the blockade, its industry struggled to meet the demands of the war effort and the effects on German civilians was even more pronounced.⁴ Huge shortages of supplies forced Germany to ration its resources, a lack of raw materials led to a decline in industrial production, but more noticeable was a lack of imported food and fertilizer.⁵ The blockade has long been viewed as one of the most

¹ Kennedy, G. (2007) *Intelligence and the Blockade, 1914–17: A Study in Administration, Friction and Command, Intelligence and National Security*, 22:5, 699-721,

² Ibid

³ Ibid

⁴ Cox, M. E. (2019). *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*. Oxford University Press.

Lambert, N. A. (2012). *Planning Armageddon : British Economic Warfare and the First World War*.

Piller, E. (2016). German Child Distress, US Humanitarian Aid and Revisionist Politics, 1918–24. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 51(3), 453–486.

Mayer, R. (2019) Noncombatant Immunity and the Ethics of Blockade, *Journal of Military Ethics*, 18:1, 2-19,

Hertog, J. D. (2010) The Commission for Relief in Belgium and the Political Diplomatic History of the First World War, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 21:4, 593-613,

⁵ Ibid

prominent causes of the defeat of Germany: mass food shortages, a strangled economy, and rising public opposition to the war within Germany all came as a direct result of the blockade and all helped lead to the overthrow of the Kaiser and the ending of the war.⁶ The blockade has received, over time, a huge amount of interest from within the historiography of the Great War.⁷ However, despite having its own relatively extensive historiography there has never been a detailed study of the relationship between international law, the blockade, and British political decision making and public opinion. As both the blockade and management of public opinion through propaganda and particularly the press were such key aspects of political life in Britain during the Great War, this thesis aims to expand on the current historiography by bringing the historiography of the blockade together with generally unused primary newspaper articles surrounding the blockade in order to analyse how political and public opinion in Britain not only reacted to news of the blockade but how public commentary and opinion affected the blockade and shaped its existence, particularly in relation to America. This thesis will specifically focus on the public and political opinion of blockade policy from the 1899 Hague Conference through to the lifting of the First World War blockade in mid-1919.

Although a blockade did not begin until the outbreak of war in 1914 it had been a topic of interest within Britain's political classes as well the general public from as far back as 1856 when Britain joined the Declaration of Paris, which was the first real attempt to create a codified international maritime law.⁸ Following this Declaration there had been three other attempts to codify an international maritime law that concerned itself with the

⁶ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Oxford Dictionaries, (2001). *Paris Declaration of 1856*. In *The Oxford Essential Dictionary of the U.S. Military*. : Oxford University Press..

use of blockade. The 1899 and 1907 Hague Conferences as well as the 1908 London Naval Conference all aimed at creating a unified international understanding of not only what a blockade was but also what was legal and illegal under one.⁹ International law in this period was concerned with ideas of progress, civilisation and peace, that is to say it was concerned with moral ideals. Casper Sylvest states that as international law was growing as a field of study it was underpinned by liberal internationalism and late-Victorian reformist sensibilities.¹⁰ Sylvest argues that as legal thinking became secular and moved away from natural law it was replaced by ideas concerned with public opinion and the progress of civilisation, and at this period it had become focused on progressing beyond war and conflict and using international law as a way to resolve points of international conflict.¹¹ All three attempts at codification had been subject to extensive scrutiny by the political establishment and the British public. From the emergence of liberal imperialism and liberal internationalism in the late nineteenth-century to the growth of women in politics and finally the rise of international legal scholars the concept of a blockade became a point of conversation within Britain that at the time had seldom been seen before.¹² This thesis will attempt to understand the reason for this interest and how it accorded with new forms of political activism and ideals in this period. It will then track how the blockade was implemented at the outbreak of war followed by an examination of how it was administered

⁹ Cox, M. E. (2019). *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*. Oxford University Press. P 4.

Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P 7 & 14.

¹⁰ SYLVEST, C. (2009). *British liberal internationalism, 1880–1930: Making progress?* Manchester University Press. P 61-2

¹¹ Ibid

¹² FAWCETT., M. G., & FAWCETT., M. G. (2nd of December 1918). The Blockade. *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS151718786/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=d643c85c>
The Blockade. (24th of April 1919). *Daily Mail*, 6. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1865114854/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=0a0bbcf>
"Raise The Blockade" Leaflets. (16th of May 1919). *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS153554096/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=80e9f653>

during the war. Finally, it will analyse how the 1919 extension of the blockade affected both political and public opinion of blockade eventually leading to a shift away from liberal ideals of international law and them been replaced with humanitarian concepts and rhetoric.

Interest from the British public, political parties and extra-parliamentary liberal groups over the future of blockade became a constant fixture from 1899 onwards, discussion of what had been agreed at the First Hague Conference continued so much so that by the Second some of these groups were invited to give a speech at it.¹³ Their commentary continued through the London Conference all the way till the outbreak of war in 1914. From this point there is a shift in the relationship between the blockade and public and political opinion as the war brought with it some curtailing of civil liberties and expression although, even with that, the commentary continued throughout and had a profound impact on the running and management of the blockade as well.¹⁴ By 1919 the war had ended but the blockade was extended past hostilities, such an aggressive and arguably unwarranted act caused a huge upheaval in British public and political opinion and led to some of the most thought-provoking outpourings of public commentary surrounding the blockade.¹⁵ It is for this reason that this thesis focuses on 1919 as a key year of transition and makes its most extensive use of primary documents when analysing it. This thesis will argue that during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, international law was an increasing influence on political planning of the blockade as well as public and

¹³ (FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.). (19th of June 1907). The Peace Conference. *Times*, 5. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS84735187/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=GDCS&xid=d734c3f0>

¹⁴ Monger, D. (2012). The Development of Wartime Propaganda and the Emergence of the NWAC. In *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain: The National War Aims Committee and Civilian*

¹⁵ Cox, M. E. (2019). *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*. Oxford University Press.

political commentary on blockade policy and the blockade itself. However, over the course of the war this influence declined in the face of strategic military needs and the loss of faith in international law following the atrocities of war and was replaced by emerging concepts of humanitarianism centred on international solidarity, sisterhood and peace.

In terms of assessing the influences on blockade planning and on political opinion, there is an abundance of historiography concerned with both the blockade and public opinion separately but very limited studies of the two together. One of the first substantial works written on the blockade is Archibald C. Bell's work *A History of the Blockade of Germany* published in 1937.¹⁶ This work focused on the diplomatic history of the blockade and was written as an official text for the Committee of Imperial Defence and therefore lacks historical criticism. A more complete view of the blockade is given in Marion Siney's *The Allied Blockade of Germany 1914-1916* published in 1957.¹⁷ This work also examines the diplomatic history of the blockade. This work is more history focused than Bell's although it relies heavily on Bell as a source. Siney examines the effectiveness of British negotiations with neutral powers aimed at limiting or even stopping trade with Germany, Siney then analyses how the negotiations set up a sort of commerce passport system based on previous trade statistics and other intel. Other historiographies focus on the military history of the blockade such as Edward Keble Chatterton's *The Big Blockade* published in 1932.¹⁸ This work focuses on the military history of the blockade in relation to naval operations. Most works of the blockade follow this trend of focusing on either the military or diplomatic

¹⁶ *A history of the blockade of Germany and of the countries associated with her in the Great War, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, 1914-1918 / by A.C. Bell.* (1961). H.M. Stationery Off.

¹⁷ Siney, M. C. (1957). *The Allied Blockade of Germany, 1914-1916.* Michigan : University of Michigan Press.

¹⁸ Chatterton, E. K. (1932). *The Big Blockade.* Hurst & Blackett

history. That is until 2004 and the publication of Eric W. Osbourne's *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*.¹⁹

More recently, historians have shifted to look at the effects of the blockade. Most notably of these is Mary E. Cox who, using new sources, focuses on the impact of the blockade on children and women in Germany in her work: *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*.²⁰ Recent interest in the blockade has also been encouraged by the rise in the history of humanitarianism, such as Elisabeth Piller's *German Child Distress, US Humanitarian Aid and Revisionist Politics, 1918–24*²¹, as well as interest in women's movements during the war such as Alison Fell's and Ingrid Sharp's *The Women's Movement in Wartime : International Perspectives, 1914-19*.²² Finally, interest in the legality of the blockade comes from outside the field of history such as Robert Mayer's *Noncombatant Immunity and the Ethics of Blockade*.²³ This renewed interest in the blockade has all touched on or made some reference to the blockade in relation to public opinion, but none have gone as far as to look at the two as the focus of a study. Furthermore, none of these current works have made use of the now widely available articles from the press during the blockade period. Although international law in terms of the legality of blockade has been widely covered in the blockade historiography there has not been a study looking at the influence of international law on the blockade. Mayer looks at how the international law allows for an interpretation were food indirection does not violate noncombatant

¹⁹ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*.

²⁰ Cox, M. E. (2019). *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*. Oxford University Press.

²¹ Piller, E. (2016). German Child Distress, US Humanitarian Aid and Revisionist Politics, 1918–24. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 51(3), 453–486.

²² Fell, A., & Sharp, I. (Eds.). (2007). *The Women's Movement in Wartime : International perspectives, 1914-19*.

²³ Robert Mayer (2019) Noncombatant Immunity and the Ethics of Blockade, *Journal of Military Ethics*, 18:1, 2-19,

immunity but fails to examine the influence that the already existing international law played on the running of the blockade.²⁴ Cox also makes reference to international law in their work stating that as the same Conferences used to establish blockade law were also used to define the principals of international law there is overlap between the two but Cox primarily uses international law as a way to contextualise their work on the effects of the blockade and as such it does not provide much insight into the influence of international law on public and political opinion of blockade and blockade policy.²⁵

In order to complete an extensive study of the influence of international law on political and public opinion as well as the blockade this thesis has three main areas of focus. Chapter 1 puts the blockade in its immediate context. The chapter begins with a discussion of the modern history of blockade, looking at uses of blockade in the 1800s and the consequences of them in the form of the Declaration of Paris. It goes on to then provide the first analysis of the relationship between public opinion and the blockade by examining British public opinion at the First Hague Conference and assessing its influence. The Conference was concerned with establishing international law in regard to warfare and had a specific focus on the use of blockade. The chapter looks at the opinions expressed by several groups including politicians from both the Conservative and Liberal parties, women's liberal and pacifist groups, legal scholars, and the military. The chapter goes on to do the same for the Second Hague Conference and London Naval Conference. Throughout, the chapter looks at how ideas and thoughts around blockade evolved over time and how these

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Cox, M. E. (2019). *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*. Oxford University Press.

changing ideas related to developments in the wider political culture and are reflected in the Conferences and deliberations surrounding them.

Chapter 2 examines the blockade from just before the outbreak of the First World War through till the end of hostilities in 1918. It begins with an examination of the planning of a blockade before the outbreak of war and public discussion over what a blockade should be like and whether it should adhere to international law or not. It then looks at how the outbreak of war and the transition from discussions of a theoretical blockade to the implementation of a physical one impacted public opinion. It then provides a chronological study of the blockade. It goes through the blockade year by year analysing how the ever-changing war and aims of the blockade as well as the role of propaganda affects public opinion. The chapter focuses on the role of the press throughout the war and how it was used by both the public and Government as a tool of persuasion and a forum of debate in order to express ideas of blockade. The chapter provides an analysis of the effectiveness of the blockade as this was one area of the blockade that received extensive focus from the public during the war. It also analyses the importance of balancing the effects of public opinion with both military and political tactics specifically in regard to the respect of neutral trade during the war and the need for American appeasement. Throughout this chapter there is a focus on Edward Grey and his personal influences on the blockade. The early section of the chapter deals with Grey at the height of his power, as Foreign Secretary and an authority on international law and blockade. The chapter then tracks the fall of Grey and his ideas, from the outbreak of the war Grey remained committed to international law and as such became a blockade to the blockade. However, as the war progressed Grey's personal influence declined in the face of the war and its atrocities ultimately ending with

the downfall of Grey when he was removed from office with the ending of the Asquith Government.

Chapter 3 is a focused study of the extension period of the blockade from late 1918 till mid-1919. The chapter provides an extensive study of the nature of wartime press and the role that the press played during the war and the impact it had upon public opinion. The chapter then explores how various pressure groups made astute use of the press during the blockade's extension in order to influence public opinion either in favour of or against the blockade's extension. The chapter centres on humanitarian groups such as the Fight the Famine Council as well as several political groups including the Independent Labour Party and Women's National Liberal Federation that were arguing against the extension of the blockade and actively campaigning for not only its lifting but also for aid to be sent to the starving continent. On the other side it looks at responses from the Government and those that supported the continuation of blockade, such as Millicent Garrett Fawcett. The chapter then conducts a focused analysis of three distinct news articles that were published during the blockade's extension, examining how they reported its effects, and most importantly how they attempted to mobilize public opinion surrounding the blockade's extension and the political context for their particular stance.

This thesis makes extensive use of secondary works of history surrounding the blockade, international law, women's movements, and political decision making, including biographical histories. When looking at political decision making this thesis has focused upon the biographies of Grey as he was the key political force behind the influence of international law and blockade. When looking at Grey this thesis relies on the biographies of

Otte and as such provides a revisionist view of Grey as someone who genuinely believed in international law and whose beliefs became a victim of the war. Other biographical works this thesis makes use of is those of legal scholar John Westlake. As Westlake was the leading authority on legal positivism and international law in Britain. His theories are key to understanding the influence of international law on the British public and political opinions and the planning of the blockade. This thesis also makes use of the contemporary interpretations of the nature of international law using works by Sylvest. Other contemporary works used within this thesis are on the subjects of the women's movements and pacifism, such as those by Sharpe, the political climate and blockade planning, referring to Osbourne, and the politics of the Liberal Party and the fall of the Asquith government at the hands of the press, considering the work by Williams.

In addition to the secondary literature, this thesis also makes use of primary sources. It uses a selection of newspaper articles acquired from Gale Primary Sources. The articles were selected in order to provide a breadth of examples including *The Times*, *Daily Mail*, and the *Manchester Guardian*. There is a large historiography concerned with the nature of the press in the late Victorian/early twentieth century, many works have focused on the growth of the Press Barons or the effects of wartime censorship. This thesis will use a combination of these two approaches as well as the historiography of wartime propaganda in order to provide an analysis of the influence of international law on public commentary. The press before the war was not only free but thriving however, at the outbreak of war a series of laws aimed at censoring the press were passed. These restrictions on the press, although they took a couple of years to really take effect, changed the nature of the press, limiting what they could print and discuss making it harder to gauge public opinion during the war and what influence international law was having upon it at the time. Furthermore,

the increased influence of propaganda on public opinion during the war obscures whether changes in public opinion are the result of the changing influence of international law or the result of propaganda.

The historiography of the press treats the years 1890-1922 as the 'Northcliffe Revolution' 1890 is seen as a turning point in history for the British press.²⁶ Kevin Williams summarises the period as one of change, Lord Northcliffe is credited with bringing about these changes, the layout, content, and economic structure of newspapers were changed under Northcliffe.²⁷ The early historiography treats Northcliffe as a transformative influence solely responsible for creating modern press and democracy relationships in Britain.²⁸ Jean Chalaby (1998) and Martin Conboy (2002) both argue as such in their respective works. Revisionist historians, such as Matthew Engel. (1999), however view Northcliffe in less positive light, they accuse Northcliffe of abusing his position of power and influence in order to push his own personal political views and messages.²⁹ Recent views, such as Williams (2009), of Northcliffe and the press attribute that most of the revolutions experienced under Northcliffe were in fact not a product of his own design but actually imported ideas from other countries such as France and the United States during a period referred to as the 'New Journalism.'³⁰ Furthermore, many of these contemporaries, including Williams, credit Northcliffe's success with his astute understanding that the growth of education among the working class in combination with more leisure time and disposable income created a new a market for newspapers which Northcliffe exploited to much success.³¹

²⁶ Williams, K. (2009). *Read all about it! : A History of the British Newspaper*. P. 125

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Ibid

²⁹ Ibid

³⁰ Ibid

³¹ Ibid

Throughout, the historiography Northcliffe is always a central focus and as such is one of the primary focuses of this thesis especially in concern with tracking public commentary and examining the influence of the press. The outbreak had a variety of effects on the nature of the press, many papers rallied behind the war including those of Northcliffe but some, such as the *Labour Leader* and *Manchester Guardian*, initially opposed the war until public opinion forced them to change course and follow suit.³² Thanks to rising pro-war sentiment and ever-growing propaganda opposition to the war became commercial suicide for any newspaper, this was experienced by Northcliffe when despite this he used his papers to attack Lord Kitchener then Secretary of State for War leading to a huge loss in circulation.³³ Even after Kitchener's death Northcliffe continued to be critical of the war effort, so much so he conspired with fellow press magnets to conduct a sustained anti-Asquith campaign that ultimately led to the downfall of Asquith and his replacement as Prime Minister with Lloyd George.³⁴ The historiography credits this turn of events as a defining point in the history of the British press. Following his appointment as Prime Minister Lloyd George invited many of the press magnets, including Northcliffe, into the Government.³⁵ The historiography sees this appointment as the cause of Northcliffe's ultimate position of power, with these appointments the press became tools of the Government for promoting propaganda, but it also gave the press such a privileged position that they were able to print whatever they wanted with little consequence.³⁶ This is the argument of David George Boyce. in their biography of Northcliffe.

³² Temple, M. (2008). *The British Press*. McGraw-Hill Open University Press. P. 31

³³ Ibid

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ Boyce, D. Harmsworth, Alfred Charles William, Viscount Northcliffe (1865–1922), Journalist and Newspaper Proprietor. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

³⁶ Ibid

As mentioned earlier the role of propaganda needs to be considered when studying any influence acting upon the British public during the war. The historiography of propaganda has several highly focused areas of interest including: studies comparing patriotism and jingoism such as Brock Millman (2000 and 2005) who use propaganda as an example of opposing dissent similar to that of Marvin. Swartz (1971).³⁷ More generic studies of British propaganda, such as Cate Haste, and Michael L. Sanders and Philip. M. Taylor focus on the Government's involvement with creating propaganda and its use abroad.³⁸ Other areas of focus have included David Monger (2012) study examining the Nation War Aims Committee and the representation of patriotism within it or John Horne (1997) comparative study between the Committee and its French equivalent.³⁹ Overall, despite receiving massive attention from the historiography there has yet to be a study that focuses on the role of propaganda in the changing influence of international law over the period of the Great War, this thesis will demonstrate that the influence of more popularist propaganda centred on German 'barbarism' and German breaches of international law in the form of unrestricted submarine warfare rose in the face of declining influence from international law and was in part responsible for this decline.

³⁷ Millman, B. *Managing Domestic Dissent in First World War Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), p. 99. Millman, B. 'HMG and the War against Dissent, 1914–1918', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 40:3 (2005), p. 416.

Swartz, M. *The Union of Democratic Control in British Politics during the First World War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971)

³⁸ Haste, C. *Keep the Home Fires Burning: Propaganda in the First World War* (London: 1977)

Sanders, M. L., & Taylor, P. M. (1982). *British Propaganda during the First World War, 1914-18*. Macmillan.

³⁹ Monger, D. (2012). Introduction. In *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain: The National War Aims Committee and Civilian Morale* (pp. 1-14). Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Horne, J. 'Remobilizing for "Total War": France and Britain, 1917–1918', in Horne (ed.), *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 195–211.

Chapter 1- An Introduction to Blockades, International Law and Public Opinion

The British had planned to blockade an enemy in the event of war long before war was declared in 1914. The Admiralty had been war gaming and planning policy for a blockade as early as 1904 when the Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence Sir George Sydenham Clarke issued a memorandum suggesting that there should be a law preventing the right of nations to capture neutral ships in a war.⁴⁰ The Admiralty was determined to defend this right and did so 'In a Foreign Office memorandum of 23 September 1905, that laid out the progress toward the meeting of a new Hague Conference'.⁴¹ The Hague Conferences were just one of a number of international meetings/conferences in the late half of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth-century that helped define not only what international law considered to be a blockade but also what nations were allowed to, and forbidden from, blockading in the event of war.⁴² These international laws not only shaped the British Governments plans for blockades and foreign policy but also influenced the planning of the Admiralty for a blockade as well as public and political opinion within Britain in regards to the use of blockade and the promises of peace, progress and moral internationalism that came with international law. These laws were of vital importance at the outbreak of war in 1914, although many nations were yet to ratify them in their respected legislatures at the outbreak of war most countries declared that they would abide by them during the course of the conflict.⁴³ As these laws form the basis of the legal framework of a blockade, as well as the international understanding of

⁴⁰ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 27

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Hindley, M. (2000) Constructing Allied Humanitarian Policy, *The Journal of Holocaust Education*, 9:2, 77-102, P. 80.

⁴³ Doenecke, J. D., & Doenecke, J. D. D. (2011). *Nothing Less than War: A New History of America's Entry into World War I*. P. 45

what a blockade was, they need to be closely analysed. Although the conferences and their outcomes had dramatic consequences for the understanding and planning of a blockade they also had a huge impact on public as well as political opinion in Britain surrounding the ideas of British foreign policy, international responsibility, war and just military tactics. The primary area of public opinion effected by these conferences was that of British liberal thought which reacted to the conferences with a sense of hope for international law as a way to avoid war and guarantee peace and freedom.

This chapter will analyse the development of the laws in order to contextualise the British use of blockade in the First World War whilst also exploring the development and outlook of the principles of British liberal thought at this turning point in history. It will do so by looking at the development of British thought in the Liberal Party but also in other spheres of liberal thought and activism that were emerging in this period including liberal women's groups and liberal legal scholars. The chapter will not only look at the impact that the conferences and their outcomes had on the opinions of these groups but also how these groups were involved with the conferences and how their commentary of the conferences affected their outcomes. It will do so by analysing how these groups were involved in the decision making within these conferences but also how public and political opinion expressed in the press influenced the conferences outcomes. It will also examine how these conferences were reported to the public and how this affected public opinion on their aims and outcomes. It will also mention the pragmatic decisions made by the Admiralty and Royal Navy to explain certain decisions. The chapter will argue that international law and its promises of peace, progress, and moral internationalism were the primary influences on British blockade policy as well as public and political commentary on blockade policy at the two Hague Conferences and the London Naval Conference. It will also demonstrate how

liberal politicians and women's groups used international law to motivate supporters of their own causes in an era of growing democracy by showing how international law demonstrated and illustrated their broader political stances. This chapter will demonstrate how international law took centre stage when discussing blockade prior to the outbreak of war and examine how it came to be at the fore of British ideas regarding the governance of blockade.

This chapter will focus primarily on two conferences and the Declaration of London as well as their outcomes. Firstly, the First Hague Conference 1899 and the outcome of that Conference. Secondly, the Second Hague Conference 1907 which produced the substantial bulk of international law surrounding the use of blockade. Lastly, this chapter will look at the Declaration of London, which established an international code of maritime law and was the result of the 1909 London Naval Conference, which was, itself, a part of the debates surrounding the Second Hague Conference.⁴⁴ The chapter will make brief reference to some earlier conferences/treaties in order to provide context.

This chapter will primarily be historiographical, focusing on secondary sources, it will make use of works by historians of several schools of thought in order to provide a well-rounded interpretation of the conferences and their outcomes. This chapter aims to expand on the current historiography by focusing on public and political opinion an area which thus far is somewhat neglected within the historiography. It will focus on liberal statesmen as well as liberal political groups paying close attention to the influence that international law and liberal internationalism had on British liberalism in this era. Firstly by considering how

⁴⁴ *Declaration Concerning the Laws of Naval War. London, 26th of February 1909.* Available: <https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/applic/ihl/ihl.nsf/Treaty.xsp?action=openDocument&documentId=E08DDA302F7397ADC12563CD002D68C5>.

Thomas Otte separates political action from political ideas by looking at how the needs of the Foreign Office can overrule the political ideals of the individual statesmen, such that, for example, 'Hardinge supported the efforts by Grey and fellow Liberal Imperialists in the Cabinet to push through a substantial increase in ship-building during the acrimonious naval estimates crisis in the spring of 1909, so as 'to knock out the little Navy people in Cabinet'.⁴⁵ Here Foreign Secretary Grey is putting his liberal ideals of internationalism and international law to one side and putting his sympathies for liberal imperialism ahead in order to advocate the pragmatic and strategic need for increased shipping quotas for defence. Likewise, Jeanne Morefield is able to differentiate between an individual's political ideals and political actions by exploring the pragmatic needs of the international stage at the period and analysing how these needs influence their political actions sometimes in opposition to their own ideals.⁴⁶ In addition, Michael Bentley explains that in order to better understand the actions of the Liberal Party it is necessary to examine the ever-changing concept of liberalism in Britain and analysing how these changes in the ideology differed from the policies within the Liberal Party, Bentley then uses this analysis to explain the reasons behind the split of the Liberal Party in the First World War, this again shows the tension between ideas and actions versus reaction to events and pragmatic/strategic needs. Finally, Iain Stewart describes the methodology used by Helena Rosenblatt in their work, Rosenblatt refuses to give a fixed definition of liberalism because it is an ever-changing idea, they instead rely on studying 'self-titled liberals'.⁴⁷ This thesis takes up Stewart's approach

⁴⁵ Otte, T. G. *The Foreign Office Mind: The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865–1914*, Cambridge University Press, 2011. P.335

⁴⁶ Morefield, J. (2005). *Covenants without Swords: Idealist Liberalism and the Spirit of Empire*. PRINCETON; OXFORD: Princeton University Press.

⁴⁷ Stewart, I. (2020). On Recent Developments in the New Historiography of (Neo)Liberalism. *Contemporary European History*, 29(1), 116-124.

to intellectual and political history viewing liberalism as an ever-changing concept that has no fixed definition. Therefore, when studying political history, it is worth understanding that an individual's concept of what is liberal is always subject to change and will be different throughout their life. Therefore, this thesis will examine the politics of an individual, like Edward Grey, in the moment rather than assume a constant adherence to a particular ideal. This thesis has taken their understanding of political ideals, such as international law and promises of peace, as an explanation of their political actions while also considering the context of these actions, such as: when they were working pre-war, defence, threats of war, naval arms race, and the needs of protecting the Empire. This links to the approaches taken by both Otte and Morefield by examining an individual's ideals versus pragmatic needs. Furthermore, this thesis will also consider strategic considerations when looking at individuals involved in military positions like Sir Charles Ottley.

Furthermore, this thesis will consider the importance of the growth of public opinion and commentary on international law and conduct of war. This is especially important in this period considering it coincides with the growth of the franchise, following the 1884 Representation of the Peoples Act, and the South African War 1899-1902. This thesis will do this by looking at which politicians, and their respective parties, represented Britain at these conferences and what role they played in the final outcome, it will examine the different political and philosophical ideas that influenced these politicians in their lives while also considering the political, diplomatic and strategic considerations within which they worked, and will argue that these considerations included public opinion. This section will also look at other influences present at the conferences from the Government such as within the military specifically, the influence of the Admiralty. This influence will be examined by

primarily looking at the works of the naval officer Sir Charles Langdale Ottley and the role of Admiral John Arbuthnot Fisher, first Baron Fisher.

Secondly, this chapter will focus on the role that women's groups played in the conferences and examine how their ideas on international and blockade law evolved over time. This is because, by the time of the First World War, women's groups were critical in mounting a public criticism of the blockade and securing aid for children affected by the blockade. Furthermore, women's groups were also one of the key arenas for the development of liberal political thought as foreign policy was a new area for women to get involved with politics as a result of the suffrage and feminist-pacifist movements. Whereas future chapters will look at the peace movement on a whole, this chapter will focus on the early days of organised feminist pacifism. It will do this by looking at the Women's Liberal Federation and other women's groups. This will build on the current historiography to provide details of how these groups used international law as a new arena of debate and how their ideas on international law evolved. This work will build on the works of Eliza Riedi and Heloise Brown and put their works on women's groups publications in the context of international law. Finally, it will look at the influence that legal scholars had on the conferences and their outcomes but mainly it will show how economic warfare was an area where liberal scholars were involved and therefore helped shaped liberalism in the period. It will do this by looking at the roles of legal scholar John Westlake and other legal scholars belonging to the school of Legal Positivism. It will examine how their works and opinions influenced not only other scholars but also politicians, international statesmen, the educated public and others who would have read their works.

In order to understand why the First Hague Conference was called in 1899 it is important to remember that over the previous c.150 years there had been several attempts already made to create a unified policy on the definition of, and the international law concerning, blockade. However, none of these earlier attempts had as much success as the Hague Conferences. The earliest of these attempts can be dated to 1780 when Russia, Sweden and Denmark formed the League of Armed Neutrality focused on the rules of blockade and neutrality.⁴⁸ Many of these earlier attempts to control blockade failed due to the fact that the British, who were the largest economic and naval power in the world, refused to join any of them and place what it believed to be unnecessary limits on its power.⁴⁹ The British released its own policies of blockade including 'The Rule of the War of 1756' and 'The Doctrine of Continuous Voyage' both of which were aimed at maintaining Britain's unrestricted use of blockade. This is indicative of British political thinking of the time as during these early conferences the ruling political parties were either the Tory or Whig party. It is not until Britain sees the rise of liberal political thought that they start getting involved in these conferences.⁵⁰ By 1856 Britain moved away from reliance on its military power to focus on its diplomatic power and influence on international law.⁵¹ This can be seen by its decision to sign the Declaration of Paris 1856 in response to the events of the Crimean War.⁵² This declaration was the first real attempt to create a codified international maritime law.⁵³ This came at a time when liberal political thought was on the rise and just a few years prior to the establishment of the Liberal Party and was overseen by

⁴⁸ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P 7-8

⁴⁹ Ibid

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Førlund, T. (1993). The History of Economic Warfare: International Law, Effectiveness, Strategies. *Journal of Peace Research*, 30(2), 151-162. P 152.

⁵³ Oxford Dictionaries, (2001). *Paris Declaration of 1856*. In The Oxford Essential Dictionary of the U.S. Military. Oxford University Press.

Prime Minister Lord Palmerstone who went on to become Britain's first Liberal Prime Minister.⁵⁴ This shows how the growth of liberal political thought in Britain coincides with its increased involvement in international conferences concerned with maritime law and the use of blockade. Several historians have pointed to this change in British policy as a turning point for international law, but all have failed to attribute this change to the growth of liberal political thought. Following the signing of the Paris Declaration there was no major attempt to revisit the rules of maritime and blockade law until the calling of the First Hague Conference in 1898 by Tsar Nicholas II⁵⁵

In order to understand the influence of international law at the First Hague Conference it is key to look at the legal scholars of the period and their comments on the Conference. Most prominently among them was the British legal scholar John Westlake and the ideas of Legal Positivism. Throughout the early attempts made on the international stage to form some kind of international recognition of arbitration and maritime law there had been a parallel growth in the number of legal scholars that were specialising in international law. Much like the women's groups this new arena of study presented a new way in which legal scholars could present their ideas and demonstrate their theories and their professional standing. This period sees these legal scholars start to organise themselves into international societies and with it comes everchanging debates and ideas surrounding international law and blockade.

⁵⁴ Lemnitzer, J. M. (2013) 'That Moral League of Nations against the United States': The Origins of the 1856 Declaration of Paris, *The International History Review*, 35:5, 1068-1088,

⁵⁵ *The Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907. A Series of Lectures Delivered before the Johns Hopkins University in the Year 1908. By James Brown Scott. Technical delegate of the United States to the Second Peace Conference at the Hague. In two Volumes. Volume II – Documents. Baltimore, MD : The Johns Hopkins Press, 1909.*

Many of these scholars published their research and comments on the policies and ideas for international law presented at the Hague Conferences, which will have had some influence on the British public and, more especially, British political opinion surrounding these Conferences. This is evidenced by Westlake's use of the press. Westlake commonly wrote letters to the press, namely *The Times*, for publication in an attempt to bring public attention to matters relating to international law. One such example is from a letter published in *The Times* in December 1908 relating to the capture of Venezuelan gunboats by the Netherlands. In this letter Westlake points out that the Dutch had taken advantage of an oversight within the laws of the First Hague Conference whereby they could commence hostiles without any prior warning. Westlake uses this letter to show how they managed to do this and calls for this oversight to be addressed at the Hague Conference of 1913 and on current international lawyers at the time to discuss the oversight. 'The filling the lacuna thus left may be commended to The Hague Conference of 1913, and in the meantime to friendly and thorough discussion by international lawyers.'⁵⁶

The same was true of the First Hague Conference were several scholars make comments on the laws and agreements made at the Conference and how effective these agreements might be in practice. At the time of the Conference the most prominent liberal school of thought was that of Legal Positivism. When studying international law, it is important to consider Legal Positivism as there is 'a close link between the study and promulgation of international law and the ideology of Liberal internationalism.'⁵⁷ In trying to

⁵⁶ WESTLAKE., J. (24th December 1908). Holland And Venezuela. *Times*, 4. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS67958680/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=ed5f9734>

⁵⁷ SYLVEST, C. (2009). *British Liberal Internationalism, 1880–1930: Making progress?* Manchester University Press. P 61.

better understand Legal Positivism a number of legal scholars tried to apply its teachings to that of the outcome of the Hague Conference, Historian Casper Sylvest argues that,

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, prominent liberal intellectuals in Britain grappled with the central conundrums of international politics, including the nature and causes of war, the role and character of ethics and law, and the preconditions necessary for securing peace.⁵⁸

Therefore, it can be concluded that the study of Legal Positivism is key to understanding the influence of liberal thought on the Hague Conference. Sylvest names the prominent British legal scholar John Westlake as one of the important commentators on the links between Legal Positivism and the Hague Conference.⁵⁹ This is a logical conclusion as Westlake not only wrote extensively on international law prior to, during, and immediately after the Conference, but he also sat on the International Court of Arbitration that was established at the Conference.⁶⁰ Therefore, Westlake will have had first-hand experience of the laws in practice. Westlake is credited by Sylvest as contributing to the,

influential definition and defence of international law [which] also demonstrates the salient combination of legal evolutionary arguments and belief in the progress of civilisation. From this perspective, almost all developments within the field of international law – codification, arbitration, the Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907 – could be turned into signposts of a historical process which, paradoxically perhaps, stressed the immaturity and fragility of international law as well as its innate rationale, rationality and resilience.⁶¹

Westlake had an influential impact on the First Conference by defending it and the hopes it brought for the growth of international law. Westlake makes the argument for using internationally agreed precepts on the use of blockade as a way to avoid war directly in his work, *Pacific Blockade* (1909), where he states,

⁵⁸ Ibid P 3.

⁵⁹ SYLVEST, C. (2009). *British Liberal Internationalism, 1880–1930: Making progress?* Manchester University Press. P 74.

⁶⁰ Wells, N. (2008). Westlake, John (1828–1913), jurist. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁶¹ SYLVEST, C. (2009). *British Liberal Internationalism, 1880–1930: Making progress?* Manchester University Press. P 87.

Any blockade established in time of peace is a Pacific blockade in the etymological sense of the words, but in the technical sense that term signifies an institution of international law permitting certain acts of force to be done without a declaration of the intent of war.⁶²

Westlake thus gave the Conference the backing of the liberal legal school of thought.

Overall, it is clear to see that these developments in liberal thinking had a profound impact on the development of, and eventual outcome from, the First Hague Conference. As Eric Osborne argues,

Foreign policy and naval policy coincided at the First Hague Conference, but for the last time. After this watershed conference the former dominated the latter. Increasingly in the years following the conference, peace through international law and neutral rights took precedence over the old dependence on peace through naval strength. Both the shift in foreign policy and the burden of naval requirements made a British desire to remain neutral in time of war the ever-growing consideration in the early twentieth century.⁶³

The First Hague Conference.

The First Hague Conference 1899 was called at a time when Britain had a Coalition Government that was led by a Conservative Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury, and his party working with the Liberal Unionists.⁶⁴ The make-up of this Government was unusual as the Prime Minister was leading the Government from the House of Lords and there were a lot of internal power struggles within the House of Commons.⁶⁵ One area where this was most apparent was in the Foreign Office. Lord Salisbury held the position of Foreign Secretary while Prime Minister as this was his field of expertise.⁶⁶ There is perhaps an expectation with a foreign policy expert as P.M. that Britain would take a commanding role with the First Hague Conference the actuality was Britain, or more specifically Lord Salisbury, seems to

⁶² Westlake, J., Oppenheim, L. (Lassa). (1914). *The collected papers of John Westlake on public international law*. Cambridge [England]: at the University Press. P. 572

⁶³ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P 14.

⁶⁴ Smith, P. (2011). Cecil, Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-, Third Marquess of Salisbury (1830–1903), Prime Minister. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁶⁵ Smith, P. (2011). Cecil, Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-, Third Marquess of Salisbury (1830–1903), Prime Minister. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁶⁶ Otte, T. G. (2011). *The Foreign Office Mind : The making of British foreign policy, 1865–1914*. P 21.

have had little interest in the Conference. This impression derives from a lack of study on both Lord Salisbury and the First Hague Conference but the number of texts that deal with the two is very limited. However, it is known that Britain did take part in the Conference, and it is argued by some that the reason for this was due to the power struggles of the Coalition Government and the will of the Liberal Unionists to take part in the Conference.⁶⁷ These divisions were a part of an ongoing feud within British foreign policy between Salisbury and his Liberal Ministers. They had clashed earlier in the decade over the retention of Uganda with Salisbury and the Foreign Office winning out in that instance.⁶⁸ As a result of this British foreign policy was in a state of constant flux between the two vying powers making it difficult to examine or analyse as there was no one set foreign policy; however, it is possible that the decision to attend the Conference was secured by Liberal Unionist pressure to attend. Then again, it has also been argued that Britain was slow to partake in the Conference as the invites came shortly following an incident with France at Fashoda and war was a possibility which would have made attending the Conference on disarmament redundant.⁶⁹ Nevertheless, Britain did attend the Conference with Lord Salisbury's consent. Lord Pauncefoot was sent as the main British delegate with the remainder of the delegation made-up primarily of military representatives.⁷⁰

At the Conference the Conservative line of political thought took precedent in Britain's political decision making at the Conference. This is seen especially when we consider Lord Salisbury's comments on Britain's isolation and letters to Lord Pauncefoot

⁶⁷ Smith, P. (2011). Cecil, Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-, Third Marquess of Salisbury (1830–1903), Prime Minister. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. .

⁶⁸ Otte, T. G. (2011). *The Foreign Office Mind: The making of British foreign policy, 1865–1914*. P 193.

⁶⁹ Barcroft, S. (1989). The Hague Peace Conference of 1899. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 3(1), 55-68. P 60.

⁷⁰ Ibid P 64.

that dictated much of the British stance.⁷¹ However, it is argued that the British diplomats sent to the Conference were more liberal leaning than the P.M. as many of them sought to 'strengthen international law' which is a key concept of liberal thought.⁷² Another, example of the influence of liberal political thought comes directly from Westminster, as the voices of the Liberal Party were hard to ignore. Eric Osborne argues that,

Although enthusiasm for the conference was confined largely to Liberal politicians rather than the Conservative Government, faith in international law over armaments was clearly a powerful force at Westminster.⁷³

It is vital to look at the other British influences at the Conference: the military representatives that made up the bulk of the British delegation, the role of the women's groups as outside commentators, and the influence of law scholars from the time period. This will allow a better understanding of how international law developed and enable an analysis of the use of blockade and the development of liberal foreign policy in this era. To start we will look at the military delegates as they had most influence at the Conference.

The military stance at the Conference seems to be at odds with Lord Pauncefoot and the Foreign Office. This juxtaposition of the civil service policy at odds with the military leadership is a prime example of the unclear and contested policy of the British that continued through till the outbreak of war. In order to better understand the military position, it is important to look at the main military delegate at the Conference Sir Admiral Fisher.⁷⁴ Sir Fisher was one of the main military delegates that, as previously mentioned, was at odds with the civil part of the delegation. He was reported to have

⁷¹ Ibid P 64, 65.

⁷² Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P 11.

⁷³ Ibid P 13.

⁷⁴ Barcroft, S. (1989). The Hague Peace Conference of 1899. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 3(1), 55-68. P 66.

sought to impress on others, particularly the German delegates, that he regarded 'might as right' and that the British would not hesitate in the event of war to use their navy ruthlessly if necessary, brushing aside any agreements about arbitration or mediation.⁷⁵

However, he was credited with bringing technical knowledge to the delegation and providing sound advice, this shows that Fisher was a key influence at the Conference.

However, there is evidence to show that Fisher was in fact liberal minded, a key example of this is in 1905 when he was promoted by the Liberal Government and makes use of liberal reforms to strengthen the Royal Navy. Furthermore, Fischer's friendship with Liberal M.P. Winston Churchill shows his relation to liberal ideas.⁷⁶ However, it must be noted that one of the most liberal policies presented at the Conference, which was in regard to use of naval blockades, was blocked by Fisher at the behest of Lord Salisbury. The proposal to surrender the right to capture non-contraband private property was opposed by Fisher on the grounds it would limit the effectiveness of any blockade the British navy could impose. This objection again shows the difficulty in trying to track the political influences of a member of the military.

Although there were no women's groups present at the 1899 Hague Conference these groups were constantly commenting on the Conference and its proceedings. The growth of international law in the nineteenth-century gave these women's groups a new arena to take part in political debates. The nineteenth-century saw a growth in women's groups concerned with political ideas from all political spectrums.⁷⁷ These groups commented on political thought and had internal debates on what their foreign policies and views of international law were, as such they were involved in the discussions that led to the

⁷⁵ Halpern, P. (2010). Fisher, John Arbuthnot, First Baron Fisher (1841–1920), Naval Officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Crawford, E. (1999). *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A reference guide 1866-1928*.

Brown, H. (2004). *The Truest Form of Patriotism' : Pacifist Feminism in Britain, 1870-1902*.

development of international law.⁷⁸ This is significant as it demonstrates how feminist pacifism grew among liberal women's groups as well as showing how they used international law in order to build an international women's movement focused on ideals of peace and progress. The most notable of these women's group in Britain, at the time, making comment on these proceedings were the Women's Liberal Federation.⁷⁹ Following the announcement of the First Hague Conference the Women's Liberal Federation showed great enthusiasm for the Conference. The Federation praised the Conference

with proclamations of international sisterhood, 'the religious utterance of a vast body of women, who realised it to be their special mission to put an end to the spirit of war and to all its evil hatreds.'⁸⁰

This statement was made during a full council meeting of the Women's Liberal Federation, these meetings and annual conferences were recorded and usually published in a variety of newspapers from the period notably the *Manchester Guardian*.⁸¹ As these meetings were reported in large newspapers, they would have been read by both the general public and politicians of the period. These reports will have had an influence on the readers and would have been a display of public support for the Hague Conference. On several occasions the Women's Liberal Federation affirmed its support for international law and arbitration in the *Manchester Guardian*, when discussing the Second Boer War in 1901 Mrs Stewart-Brown, a member of the national executive committee of the Women's Liberal Federation, condemned the British actions in the war as being 'against the Hague Convention.'⁸² At a

⁷⁸ Riedi, E. (2013). The Women Pro-Boers: Gender, Peace and the Critique of Empire in the South African War. *Historical Research : The Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 86(231), 92-115.

⁷⁹ Ibid

⁸⁰ Riedi, E. (2013). The Women Pro-Boers: Gender, Peace and the Critique of Empire in the South African War. *Historical Research : The Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 86(231), 92-115.

⁸¹ Women's Liberal Federation: *Annual Conference*. (1898). The Manchester Guardian (1828-1900)

⁸² WOMEN'S LIBERAL FEDERATION: ANNUAL, MEETINGS AT BIRMINGHAM RESOLUTION ON THE WAR. (9th May 1901). *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/womens-liberal-federation/docview/473963761/se-2?accountid=11526>

council meeting in 1902 Mrs Stewart Brown put forward a motion that ‘the Council reiterated its conviction that international disputes can and should be settled by arbitration.’ This motion was seconded by a Mrs Harvie and supported by a Mrs Byles.⁸³ Finally for a third time the Federation affirmed its commitment to international arbitration in the 1903 council meeting

On the motion of Lady M’Laren the Federation again affirmed its adherence to the principle of international arbitration. In a vigorous speech Lady M’Laren combated the current theories as to the necessity and value of war.⁸⁴

These reports show the continued support of the Women’s Liberal Federation towards international law and arbitration and that this support was reported on and shared with the public. As such it can be concluded that the Federation were using this press coverage in order to galvanise support for both the Federation and international law.

Although the Federation was clearly a liberal group and had an overlap in thinking with politicians their influence was not synonymous with the Liberal Party and was also seen as been somewhat radical in their approach. Therefore, these news reports are a prime example of the importance of international law and foreign policy to these emerging women’s groups and demonstrates how they contribute to public opinion on war, peace and blockade through their public activism.

Cowman, K. Brown, Nessie Stewart [née Nessie Muspratt] (1864–1958), local politician. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Retrieved 18th February 2022, from <https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-59518>.

⁸³ THE WOMEN’S LIBERAL FEDERATION: COUNCIL MEETINGS IN LONDON. (7th May 1902). *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/womens-liberal-federation/docview/474105294/se-2?accountid=11526>

⁸⁴ WOMEN’S LIBERAL FEDERATION: ANNUAL MEETINGS IN HALIFAX SOUTH AFRICA AND EDUCATION. (13th May 1903). *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/womens-liberal-federation/docview/474274767/se-2?accountid=11526>

Furthermore, the Women's Liberal Federation had a number of influential members, most notably that of their President at the time of the Hague Conference Rosalind Frances Howard Countess of Carlisle.⁸⁵ As President of the Federation their support for the Hague Conference is synonymous with Countess Howard's support. Countess Howard was a very influential woman throughout Britain and its Empire. She enjoyed great influence throughout many women's liberal associations and had the ear of several Liberal MPs (Notable they became MPs after the Hague Conference) including: her son Geoffrey Howard, her son-in-law Charles Henry Roberts, and her secretary Leif Jones.⁸⁶ Her most notable liberal ally was that of long-time Liberal MP, and her neighbour, Sir Wilfrid Lawson. A fellow liberal, feminist, and advocate of peace Lawson would have been a great ally to the Countess and will of no doubt shared her views on the Hague Conference and the promises of peace it made.⁸⁷ These allies the Countess had within the liberal world would have allowed her significant influence within the Liberal Party and a proxy voice within the House of Commons that would have allowed her to push the Women's Liberal Federation agenda on the main stage of British politics.

There were also some other widely read women's groups' publications that will have had an impact on British public opinion as well as political opinion on the Hague Conference. *The Englishwomen's Review*, the successor to the first British feminist journal, reported the Hague Conference in positive tones, while under the editorship of several influential women including Jessie Boucherett, Caroline Ashurst Biggs, Helen Blackburn, and Antoinette

⁸⁵ Crawford, E. (1999). *The Women's Suffrage Movement : A reference guide 1866-1928*. P 2.

⁸⁶ Fahey, D. (2006). Howard [née Stanley], Rosalind Frances, Countess of Carlisle (1845–1921), promoter of women's political rights and of temperance reform. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁸⁷ Russell, G., & Fahey, D. (2006). Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, Second Baronet (1829–1906), politician and temperance campaigner. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Mackenzie.⁸⁸ The First Hague Conference took place while the *Review* was under the editorship of Blackburn and Mackenzie, and in a July 1899 article 4 of the *Review* reported on 'The Peace Conference'. It states that 'the hearts of women are beating in sympathy with the beautiful idea of the young Czar.'⁸⁹ The 'beautiful idea' been discussed here was that of disarmament and arbitration with which the women of *The Englishwomen's Review* were whole heartedly in support. The article goes on to say

In vain it has been pointed out by the practical man of sense that the idea is unpractical, by the cynic, that while the conference is proceeding Russia is increasing her armaments. Whatever advantage may have been taken by his ministers, we women refuse to believe what we are sometimes told, that the whole thing is a political trick. We hold to the belief that the Czar saw before him a beautiful ideal, and tried to carry it out. We refuse to believe that it will have no result. Is it no result that the ideal has been held up-that the attempt has been made to carry it out ?⁹⁰

Heloise Brown argues that the reason the *Review* and the women behind it were so in favour of these proposals was because they showed women to be 'inherently peace loving' and as such had 'a higher moral nature'. Brown argues that they used these ideals as a basis for the argument that women should be more involved in public life, specifically when it came to international political relations.⁹¹

As both these women and the journal itself were considered to be highly influential at the time of the writing of report on the Hague Conference the journal will have influenced both public and political opinion on the Conference and will have generated a great deal of liberal, primarily feminist liberal, support for the Conference. Overall, women's groups were able to mobilize women on issues of international law and foreign policy thus building a distinctive identity for women's political involvement through liberal-feminist

⁸⁸ Brown, H. (2004). *The Truest Form of Patriotism' : Pacifist Feminism in Britain, 1870-1902*. P 28.

⁸⁹ ART. IV.-THE PEACE CONFERENCE. (15th July 1899). *The Englishwoman's Review: A Journal of Woman's Work*, (CCXLII), 169+. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/DX1901994854/NCUK?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-NCUK&xid=3c7efe45>

⁹⁰ Ibid

⁹¹ Brown, H. (2004). *The Truest Form of Patriotism' : Pacifist Feminism in Britain, 1870-1902*. P 29

ideas on blockade, international law, peace and foreign policy. Through their use of the press and other publications reporting on the Conferences women's groups were able to galvanise women's politics, giving it a distinct ideology.

By the time of the Second Hague Conference 1907 the political landscape of Britain had drastically changed. At the start of 1906 the Liberal Party had won a landslide election victory and Henry Campbell-Bannerman was elected Prime Minister.⁹² With this came a different approach to the Second Hague Conference in almost every aspect, with the notable exception of the legal scholars. In this following section the political and military perspective will be examined together in order to draw out and examine the debate between the two that took place during the period.

The Second Hague Conference.

It will examine how the growth of liberal thought affected British policy at the Second Conference and how this differs with the First Conference thus demonstrating the changing contours of British politics and the evolving thoughts surrounding international law. With the calling of the Second Conference the liberals were all for participating in the Conference and had this time come with a clearer object than the Government of the First Conference, that been the full support for the resolution to safeguard the rights of neutral powers during blockade.⁹³ This break from the previous policy of allowing the Admiralty to dictate Britain's naval policy was indicative of the change of the influence of the Liberal Party. With the new Foreign Secretary, Edward Grey, came the full force of liberal political

⁹² Morris, A. (2008). Bannerman, Sir Henry Campbell- (1836–1908), Prime Minister. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁹³ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P 26.

thought to Britain's foreign policy.⁹⁴ Grey, like many others, was eager to secure the rights of neutrals following the Russo-Japanese war and Russia's disregard for the agreements of previous Conferences.⁹⁵ At the start of the preparation for the Conference the Foreign Office did not hide its intentions to abandon the right to capture belligerent ships in favour of gaining greater security for neutrality.⁹⁶

This focus on protecting neutrality was reflective of the influence of liberal political thought as the protection of neutrality was essential to the liberal economic policy of free trade that the British favoured at the time. This position was most apparent in December 1904 when the Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence, Sir George Clarke, released a memorandum that asserted that the right to capture these vessels was only an issue as there was no clear international definition on contraband as seen during the Russo-Japanese war.⁹⁷ This memorandum founded much of early discussion on the British position at the Conference. It was further reinforced in September 1905 when a Foreign Office memorandum was sent that laid out the official policy of the British at the Conference. This memorandum received criticism and notes from the Admiralty which did not share the same view. The Admiralty noted that it was concerned with plans regarding the rights of neutrals and private property.⁹⁸ This response was a sign of things to come, the Admiralty then went to issue a response to the Clarke memorandum that stated outright it disagreed with Grey and that the right to capture neutrals should remain to act as deterrent.⁹⁹ There were several conferences held between 1905 and 1906 that looked at the use of blockades

⁹⁴ Robbins, K. (2011). Grey, Edward, Viscount Grey of Fallodon (1862–1933), politician, countryman, and author. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

⁹⁵ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P 26.

⁹⁶ *Ibid* P 28.

⁹⁷ *Ibid* P 28.

⁹⁸ *Ibid* P 28.

⁹⁹ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P 28.

with France as an ally against Germany that furthered the Admiralty's view that the right should remain, this was supported by one of naval representatives at the conferences Sir Charles Ottley.¹⁰⁰ (Ottley went on to be one of the British delegates to the Second Conference). However, in 1906 there were some internal arguments within the Admiralty on how a blockade of Germany would work, especially in regard to her Empire, and as a result of this there was no clear policy of blockade coming from the Admiralty till 1908 (after the Second Conference).¹⁰¹ This division within the Admiralty might have been the reason that the Foreign Office were able to really take command of British policy at the Second Hague Conference. Since there were no clear arguments been made on the side of the Admiralty, Grey and his allies were able to dominate the debate on blockade and as such they were able to push the policy to protect neutrals, which was in line with the ideas of liberal political thought surrounding Free Trade. Although there were a vote in one of the committees on British policy at the Second Hague Conference which decided that Britain would vote against the surrender of belligerent rights in favour of greater protection for neutrals, this vote was effectively overturned by a later vote to push for the abolition of contraband, which ultimately gave neutrals greater protection.¹⁰² A vote which Clarke is credited with been the main influence in getting passed thus, showing yet again the influence of liberal political thought.¹⁰³ Overall, liberal political thought certainly had a more prominent influence over the British policy at, and within in the eventual outcome of, the Second Hague Conference compared with the First Conference. This was due to the weakened opposition to the Government from a split Admiralty and from the overwhelming

¹⁰⁰ Ibid P 29.

¹⁰¹ Ibid P 29.

¹⁰² Ibid P 30.

¹⁰³ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P 30.

support of the Liberal Government and Prime Minister for increased disarmament through international law.¹⁰⁴ Concerns over pragmatic strategic needs had receded by the time of the Second Hague Conference, with the growth of optimism in international law combined with a weakened Admiralty arguments against putting more faith in international law as opposed to military options were certainly fewer. The disagreements between Grey and the Admiralty only highlight how Grey's liberal ideals of faith in international law as a means of peace were more prominent at the Second Conference compared to the First and demonstrate how Grey believed that international law and blockade could be used strategically to protect Britain and its Empire instead of relying solely on military means.

Outside Parliament and the Government international law was again a topic of conversation among women's liberal groups. As with the First Hague Conference the contribution of women's groups directly involved in the Conference was limited. However, there were certainly more of a direct influence from women in the Second Conference. As with the First Conference, women's groups were able to exercise their influence through the use of publications and conferences. This was evidenced in October 1906 when, during a meeting of the Manchester Women's Peace Association, an address was given and published in the *Manchester Guardian* that stated:

the thing immediately to be done by peace associations was to bring pressure to bear upon all whom they could influence, to the end that the wishes of the Prime Minister, the Government, and the people in favour of international peace should be echoed at the next Hague Conference.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Otte, T. G. (2011). *The Foreign Office Mind : The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865–1914*. P 329.

¹⁰⁵ WOMEN AND PEACE: A MEETING IN MANCHESTER A PEACE SOCIETY. (11th October 1906). *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/women-peace/docview/474600193/se-2?accountid=11526>

This is clear evidence of women's groups actively calling for pressure to be put on the public to promote peace at the Hague Conference. This demonstrates how women's groups that had promoted the First Hague Conference as a way to galvanise support for the women's movement had expanded this support even further by the Second Conference. Even after the Second Conference and in the runup to the London Naval Conference women's groups continued to call for the promotion of peace, this was again evidenced in January 1907 when, in a letter published in the *Manchester Guardian*, it was stated:

To the societies organised for the promotion of peace and goodwill, and the associations of working men and women, would fall the task of organising the appeal to the masses in every country to their Government to support the League of Peace at the Conference at the Hague.¹⁰⁶

Again, there was a clear call on the public and the Government to promote peace at the next Hague Conference.

However, one group was also permitted to speak at the Second Conference.¹⁰⁷ The International Council of Women were permitted to address the Second Conference and gave 'an address that in favour of universal peace and disarmament'.¹⁰⁸ According to the report this address was said to be received sympathetically and with courtesy, the report itself refers to the group as being a highly influential as it represented 'millions of women all over the world.'¹⁰⁹

The International Council of Women was led by its President, Dame Ishbel Maria Gordon Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair, who personally selected Mrs Ogilvie Gordon

¹⁰⁶ Stead, W. T. (1907,). CORRESPONDENCE: BARONESSBURDETT-COUTTS SHORTAGE OF LABOUR IN THE COTTON TRADE THE NEXT HAGUE CONFERENCE AND ITS PROGRAMME PROPOSED CORPORATION TRAMWAYS LORD LOREBURN AND COUNTY JUSTICES. *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/correspondence/docview/474625930/se-2?accountid=11526>

¹⁰⁷ (FROM OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.). (19th of June 1907). The Peace Conference. *Times*, 5. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS84735187/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=GDCS&xid=d734c3f0>

¹⁰⁸ Ibid

¹⁰⁹ Ibid

to represent her and the Group at the Second Hague Conference.¹¹⁰ There were liberal influences on the group especially considering that the President of the Council was the wife, daughter, and sister of Liberal Politicians.¹¹¹ Lady Aberdeen had been surrounded by and introduced to significant liberals from a very young age, she was acquainted with the Gladstones and met her future husband, Lord John Campbell Gordon in 1875 at time when he was changing his family's allegiances from Conservative to Liberal.¹¹² Lady Aberdeen herself was a radical liberal, even more so than other women of her class, she advocated for the right of women to have trade unions and supported strikes in 1889.¹¹³ She was also the President of the Women's Liberal Federation and its Scottish counterpart.¹¹⁴ This is a clear example again of international law been used as a means to galvanise support for the international women's movement. Given Lady Aberdeen's position as head of the International Council of Women, it is clear that ideas of liberal pacifism based in international law were being used as a means to promote peace as a topic of choice to garner support for women's movements around the world.

As with the First Conference legal scholars at the time period commenting on the events of the Second Conference. Legal Positivism remained the most prominent liberal legal school at the time of the Second Conference. Also, John Westlake remained one of the most prominent liberal scholars during the Second Conference. Westlake finished being a

¹¹⁰ Ibid

¹¹¹ Jenkins, L. (2020). Gordon [née Marjoribanks], Dame Ishbel Maria, Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair (1857–1939), philanthropist and vicereine. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹¹² Jenkins, L. (2020). Gordon [née Marjoribanks], Dame Ishbel Maria, Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair (1857–1939), philanthropist and vicereine. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹¹³ Ibid

¹¹⁴ Ibid

member of the International Court of Arbitration in 1906, just before the calling of the Second Conference.¹¹⁵ In 1907 Westlake published the second part of his writings on international law titled *War*. This second section of work was a follow up to his first section from 1904 called *Peace*.¹¹⁶ Analysing the influence of these texts is key to understanding how liberal legal scholars influenced the decisions made at the Second Hague Conference. As mentioned previously Westlake was an incredibly influential legal scholar, his works were widely read by both other legal scholars and the wider public due to him publishing parts of his works and opinions in newspapers.¹¹⁷ Westlake is credited with having a notable influence over the judgements of the House of Lords and, with his works been published both prior to and during the Second Conference, according to his Oxford Dictionary of National Biographies entry his publications played a role in establishing the House of Lords approach to the Conference.¹¹⁸ Furthermore, Westlake wrote a text in response to the Second Hague Conference in 1908 where he states that the Hague Conferences had more moral authority than legal authority as the grudges of old were hard to overcome.¹¹⁹ Despite this text been published after the Second Conference, it shows the arguments of Westlake in regards to the Conference. Westlake was pushing for the Conference to do more than state what is morally right and start making enforceable law that protects from aggression due to long standing grudges. This point shows a clear link to the liberal concepts mentioned earlier in regard to the protection of neutrals thus showing that the liberal legal

¹¹⁵ Wells, N. (2008). Westlake, John (1828–1913), jurist. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹¹⁶ Ibid

¹¹⁷ Westlake, J., Oppenheim, L. (Lassa). (1914). *The collected papers of John Westlake on public international law*. Cambridge [England]: at the University Press. P, 670

¹¹⁸ Wells, N. (2008). Westlake, John (1828–1913), jurist. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹¹⁹ SYLVEST, C. (2009). *British Liberal Internationalism, 1880–1930: Making progress?* Manchester University Press. P 90.

scholars were providing a liberal influence on the British delegates at the Second Conference and on public commentary on the Conference.

The London Naval Conference and the Declaration of London.

Towards the end of the Second Hague Conference the United Kingdom invited the 10 most powerful naval powers in the world to a meeting at London.¹²⁰ This meeting became known as the London Naval Conference and lasted from December 1908 to February 1909, the purpose of this meeting was to establish what the rules of international law were in regards to belligerents and neutral nations.¹²¹ This was something which had been debated at both Hague Conferences but never agreed or codified until this meeting. The end result of the London Naval Conference was the 1909 Declaration of London, an agreement made by all present to follow the laws of blockade laid out in the 1856 Declaration of Paris and it guaranteed the legal rights of neutral merchant ships during a blockade.¹²² By the time of the London Declaration Britain had not changed much from that of the period of the Second Hague Conference. Although there were a new Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, it was still a Liberal Government in control and Sir Grey was still the Foreign Secretary.¹²³ Furthermore, the legal school of thought that still dominated was that of Legal Positivism and John Westlake remained one of the most influential liberal scholars. Furthermore, by this point the Admiralty had been reorganised and played a more active role in debates and planning of blockade and international law so requires more

¹²⁰ Cox, M. E. (2019). *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*. Oxford University Press. P 4.

¹²¹ Ibid p 4.

¹²² Ibid p 18.

¹²³ Pugh, M. (2015). Asquith, Herbert Henry, 1st earl of Oxford and Asquith. In *The Oxford Companion to British History*. : Oxford University Press.

examination then previously. To start an analysis of the Naval Conference it is key to start with the political debates.

As with the Second Hague Conference the liberal influence from the Government is very apparent, as it was a Liberal Government that not only attended the Naval Conference but were the ones to call it in the first place.¹²⁴ This is not surprising when we consider it were the British who, at the Second Hague Conference, were the ones most in favour in codifying maritime and blockade law. The final Declaration lays out not only the rules of blockade but also contains an extensive list of what contributes as contraband and what does not.¹²⁵ This provides perhaps the most telling piece of evidence as to how influential liberal political thought were at the Conference, as mentioned previously it were the Liberal Party that decided, during debates on British policy at the Second Hague Conference, that the best way to guarantee the rights of neutral were through a codified list of contraband. It is clear that by calling this Naval Conference the Liberal Party were finally able to achieve this goal and as such can be seen as been a source of liberal influence at the Conference. Though it is important to note that it was Grey that called for the London Naval Conference, he called the meeting with the hope of codifying into international law what was considered contraband so that the International Prize Court could become an effective Court.¹²⁶ Grey also hoped that by securing a well-defined list of contraband that British trade would have better security and thus protect the chief liberal economic idea of Free Trade.¹²⁷ As Grey was the primary driving force behind not only the calling of the Conference but the primary achievement of the Conference it is clear to see that liberal political thought was a key

¹²⁴ Cox, M. E. (2019). *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*. Oxford University Press. P 4.

¹²⁵ Ibid P 23.

¹²⁶ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P 33.

¹²⁷ Ibid P 33.

influence at the London Conference. Although the British political position had not changed much from that of the Second Hague Conference and thus, liberal political thought was able to remain one of the key liberal influences at the Naval Conference, one area that saw a shift in position at the London Naval Conference was the Admiralty.

As with the Second Hague Conference the Admiralty sent Sir Charles Ottley as their primary representative to the London Naval Conference. Ottley had in recent years started to disagree with the head of the Admiralty, Admiral Fisher, on many key naval policies going as far as to suggest that Fisher should be removed from his post in 1908.¹²⁸ Furthermore, Ottley had also been promoted to the head of the Committee of Imperial Defence, replacing Sir Clarke, in 1907 making him a more influential member of the Admiralty.¹²⁹ As with the Second Hague Conference the Admiralty were still split on the best policy towards the use of blockade and the rights of neutrals. However, at the London Naval Conference there was a decisive change in the approach of the Admiralty towards these debates. Instead, of the previous approach of leaving the Liberal Government to make these decision the Admiralty, or more specifically Ottley, actually accepted the limits placed on the Admiralty's use of blockade.¹³⁰ This somewhat dramatic change appears to have come more from Ottley's personal views than from a policy agreed by the Admiralty especially, as this action is considered to be the main reason that Ottley fell out of favour with Admiral Fisher ultimately leaving to Ottley leaving the Admiralty in 1912.¹³¹ This may be an example of Ottley's personal liberal leanings taking precedent over Admiralty policy, it does appear that Ottley had taken advantage of the Admiralty's lack of official policy in order to push his own

¹²⁸ Thursfield, H., & Lambert, A. (2004). Ottley, Sir Charles Langdale (1858–1932), Naval Officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹²⁹ Ibid

¹³⁰ Ibid

¹³¹ Ibid

views forward. As a result, we see here perhaps the biggest example of the influence of international legal thinking coming from the Admiralty embodied in Ottley.

Legal scholars commented abundantly on the Declaration of London. The London Declaration is considered by many legal scholars, mainly contemporary, as the real starting point of blockade law.¹³² Westlake resigned his Whewell chair in 1908 and in his later years withdrew from public life.¹³³ However, Westlake published his final major work, titled *International Law*, in 1910. The book makes no direct reference to the London Declaration, but it does sum up Westlake's life works quite neatly. The work continues to show Westlake's commitment to Legal Positivism. The work also makes frequent reference to his previous works and his belief in the International Courts. Although this work adds nothing new to the debates it shows that Westlake and the school of Legal Positivism continued to support the international conferences and their attempts to codify maritime law on the international stage. These encouragements, though limited, will have still been of some influence on British policy as Westlake was still considered to be one of the greatest legal minds of his time.

Overall, it can be clearly seen that throughout the later part of the nineteenth-century and the early part of the twentieth century that international law was a constant, if fluctuating, influence on liberal political and legal ideas of blockade. As international law grew in prominence during these Conferences there was a clear shift of both political and public opinion in Britain that favours putting more faith in international law and its promises

¹³² Nelson, R.L., & Waters, C. (2019). Slow or Spectacular Death: Reconsidering the Legal History of Blockade and Submarines in World War I. *University of Toronto Law Journal* 69(4), 473-496.

¹³³ Wells, N. (2008). Westlake, John (1828–1913), jurist. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

of peace over that of blockade. This is most clearly seen with the acceptance of the loss of the right to capture neutral ships during a time of blockade, weakening the effectiveness of any future blockade, which was replaced by faith that international law and the courts it has established will prevent the need for such a blockade. These ideas were present at both of the Hague Conferences and the London Naval Conference, making them one of the most important and dominant concepts in international law and blockade law. These concepts were championed by four clear groups which all played a distinct role in ensuring that changing liberal ideas were embedded to reflect the evolving contours of liberal foreign politics.

The Liberal Party were fortunate to always be in a position of power during a conference either as a member of a Coalition Government or as the head of their own Government outright and as such were able to provide constant support for international law as an alternative to strong blockade policy at the conferences. Grey was able to use his position as Foreign Secretary to advocate for faith in international law that created a promise of a moral basis for internationalism, as well as a promise of peace and progress. Grey as well as other Liberal politicians at the time were also aware of the growth of democracy with the increase in the franchise and as such the Liberal Party was also advocating for international law as a way of galvanising support for the Party. Following the passing of the Representation of the People Act in 1884, also known as the Third Reform Act, the size of the electorate grew extensively. The act changed the law on who was eligible to vote, it removed the requirement to own property and replaced it with the requirement of either owning property to the value of or paying annual rent to the value of, £10.¹³⁴ These

¹³⁴ BLACKBURN, R. (2011), Laying the Foundations of the Modern Voting System: The Representation of the People Act 1918. *Parliamentary History*, 30: 33-52.

changes allowed the vast majority of the male population of the country to be eligible to vote and was mirrored by a change in the relationship between political parties and the electorate.

The historiography surrounding the growth of the franchise in Britain has focused in on the Third Reform Act as a turning point in history. Richard Crossman argues that following the 1884 act 'organized corruption was gradually replaced by party organization'.¹³⁵ Phillip Norton expands on this argument and argues that political parties in this era transformed into mass-membership parties with a focus on mandates and the birth of manifestos.¹³⁶ Laurence Lowell argued that due to these changes in the relationship between party and electorate there were also a shift in the relationship between electoral candidates and the electorate, specifically that candidates were elected on the basis of their party label.¹³⁷ Phillip Norton responds to this argument and states that:

The development of representation through political parties was grafted on to the existing territorial basis of representation. MPs continued to be elected to serve defined constituencies – single-member constituencies were the norm from 1885 – and the MP was expected to act on behalf of constituents and the interests of the constituency.¹³⁸

This shows that the 1884 Act had a profound impact on the function of MPs especially when it is examined in conjunction with the 1885 redistribution of seats, for, as Norton is alluding here, as constituencies were reformed to contain a single MP representing a territory there was an expectation that the MP would have to act on behalf of their constituents. Norton however goes on to state that 'the MP often saw no conflict between the party programme and the interest of the constituency.'¹³⁹ This can still be seen

¹³⁵ Norton P. (2012) Parliament and Citizens in the United Kingdom, *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 18:3-4, 403-418,

¹³⁶ Ibid

¹³⁷ Lowell (1924) cited in Norton ibid

¹³⁸ Ibid

¹³⁹ Ibid

as growth in the power of public opinion, as the opinion of an MP's constituents now directly related to the electability of the MP.

This growth was mirrored by the growth in the importance of the press and the ability of parties to shape the opinions of the electorate in favour of their policies. This was exemplified by Gladstone who, according to Eugenio Biagini, had the 'ability to mobilise through rhetoric wide swathes of the population for appropriate causes, whether Bulgarian atrocities or Irish home rule.'¹⁴⁰ Gladstone used appeals to the electorate in order to shape public opinion around foreign policy and win support for the Liberal Government. If the constituents did not like the policies the MP was advocating for they were now in a position to vote them out. As this new relationship developed in the late 19th and earlier 20th century politicians, such as Grey, had to be more considerate of public opinion. As such Grey's actions promoting international law and peace were presented to the public as a way of galvanising support for the Liberal Party. Although Grey truly believed that international law was the best way to secure lasting peace, he still had to sell this idea to the general public and when this idea was challenged by those in the Admiralty or Parliament, he had to defend it not only for his own sake but also to ensure that public opinion was not swayed into opposing his views. This was exemplified when Grey stood up in Parliament on the 3rd of July 1911 to defend the London Declaration and the press reporting that followed: 'Sir Edward Grey... brilliantly defended the Declaration. He pointed out that we gained as neutrals under it, while we lost nothing as belligerents.'¹⁴¹ This was printed a few days after the debate. Larger papers like the *Financial Times* reported on Grey and his defence of the

¹⁴⁰ Bew, P. (2008). [Review of *Gladstone: God and politics; British democracy and Irish nationalism, 1876-1906*, by R. Shannon & E. Biagini]. *Irish Historical Studies*, 36(142), 288–289.

¹⁴¹ Imperial Parliament. (6th July 1911). *North Devon Journal*, 6. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/IG3225214486/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=5c5b4f17>

Declaration, 'Sir Edward Grey said he was convinced that we gained under the Declaration. we gained under the free list, and surely we should have much more chance in appearing before the International Court with a majority of neutral judges than before a prize court of the belligerent country itself.'¹⁴² These reports in the press show Grey's appeals and attempts to mobilise support for the Liberals and their policies. Although these are not direct appeals to the public it was common for parliamentary debates to be reported on in newspapers and therefore any arguments made in Parliament can also be considered arguments made to the public.

The Admiralty had a limited liberal influence coming from Sir Charles Ottley. As Ottley's personal influence within the Admiralty rose so too did the influence of liberal thought, rising so much so that it went on to eventually lead to the Admiralty accepting severe limitations to its blockade powers. Although strategic arguments were made by the Admiralty and some of its members for not supporting international law as an alternative to a strong blockade, pragmatic decisions concerned with budget and the influence of politicians like Grey combined with the support of Ottley eventually forced the Admiralty to support international law over blockade. Liberal women's groups played a key, if limited, role in exerting liberal influence over the conferences. Despite their direct involvement with the conferences being limited to only the Second Hague Conference they made use of their members political influence as well as their own publications to drum up and encourage constant support for the liberal policies being debated at the conferences. Furthermore, this

¹⁴² Debate in Parliament. (4th July 1911). *Financial Times*, 7+. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/HS2301301988/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=9605a1d5>

involvement in the conferences and debates helped these women's groups to galvanise support for women's politics both domestically and internationally as evidenced by the Countess of Carlisle's involvement within them which shows how this kind of public commentary gave them a focus and an ideology for their movement. Finally, the legal scholars at the time period notable John Westlake and the school of Legal Positivism made use of their scholarly titles and publications to promote and encourage support for liberal ideas of law at the conferences. As this chapter has demonstrated, international law came to be the forefront concept for the British in regard to concepts for governing blockade, thanks to the work of several liberal groups within this country. Moving forward the next chapter of this thesis will examine the blockade from 1914-1918 and focus on how the blockade was managed and who was in charge of it, the effects of the blockade and the legality of it, and it will finish by analysing public opinion particularly opposition to the blockade from various groups including many of those mentioned within the first chapter.

Chapter 2- The Blockade 1914-1918: Managing a Blockade, Opposing a Blockade and the Effects of a Blockade

The ignition of World War One when Austria-Hungary declared war on Serbia in July 1914 set Europe alight. Fuelled by the Triple Entente and Triple Alliance the flames soon reached Great Britain and with it burned away any discussions of blockade as a theoretical concept. There was now the need of a physical blockade in order to ensure the survival of a nation. Following on from the previous chapter it would be understandable to hold the expectation that after so many years of planning, debate, and discussion of a potential blockade, that the U.K. would have been more than prepared for the outbreak of war and would have implemented its blockade with both speed and ease, and although some historians such as E. Keble Chatterton suggest this to be the case, the reality was far from this.¹⁴³ In the opening months of the war the Royal Navy struggled to implement its relatively vague policy of a distant blockade which it had been advocating for in the previous years. Furthermore, Lord Grey, who was still the Foreign Secretary at the outbreak of war, was hesitant to give his approval for a blockade and abandon his sponsorship of neutral rights and international law which he had fought for at the conferences mentioned in chapter one.¹⁴⁴ As a result we see the continuation of the Admiralty and the Foreign Office at odds with each other over the policy of blockade. While a physical blockade was being somewhat half-heartedly thrown together, debates and discussions surrounding blockade policy quickly reignited.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴³ Chatterton, E. K. (1932). *The Big Blockade*. Hurst & Blackett. 25-40.

¹⁴⁴ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 58

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid* P. 58

As the debates surrounding the use of blockade continued within government with the outbreak of war the question of international law and the importance of public opinion was magnified. Throughout, the war the role of international law on political and public opinion played, arguably, an even more important role in shaping the use and policy of blockade.¹⁴⁶ From those voicing their support of the blockade, to those reporting on its effects in Germany, public opinion is key to understanding why the blockade was managed the way it was and why its organization changes over the war. This chapter seeks to provide an overview of the setting up and running of the blockade covering the years 1908-1918. Throughout the chapter will comment on the debates surrounding the blockade that existed at the time in question and also within the historiography. The debates from 1908 till the outbreak of war in 1914 had some of the first appeals to public opinion over blockade policy and international law. Politicians and others made direct appeals to the public for support through newspapers including the *Daily Mail*.¹⁴⁷ The blockade is such a key aspect of the war that it has its own extensive military historiography. There is, however, a considerable lack of attention played to the role of public opinion in this historiography despite it being flagged by historian and blockade cruiser seamen E. Keble Chatterton as early as 1932 as being an area of interest when examining the blockade.¹⁴⁸ Chatterton's work is the first published work on the blockade following the war. In it he stated that there was both public and press interest after the war for a work that detailed how the blockade was able to defeat Germany and that his work hoped to fulfil this interest for them. He argues that the press was caught off guard with the suddenness of the outbreak of war and got so caught

¹⁴⁶ Sharp, I. (2013), *Feminist Peace Activism 1915 and 2010: Are We Nearly There Yet?*. *Peace Change*, 38: 155-180.

¹⁴⁷ British Naval Opinion. (29th of April 1911). *Daily Mail*. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1866479090/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=94e693b6>

¹⁴⁸ Chatterton, E. K. (1932). *The Big Blockade*. Hurst & Blackett. P. 15

up in the mass patriotism that followed it failed to report the issues of the blockade and the restrictions placed upon it by international law.¹⁴⁹

During the war the nature of the press was different to that during times of peace. Despite the control of newspapers continuing to be dominated by the Press Barons such as Lord Northcliffe there were some major changes to the press during the war. From the onset of the war the press was immediately subject to control by the Government via the Defence of the Realm Act 1914 (DORA).¹⁵⁰ The early years of the war saw limited use of DORA as the Liberal Government wanted to preserve the image of a liberal state by 'allowing a certain amount of dissenting literature to be published unmolested' to allow the image that liberty and tolerance in the UK was still maintained despite censorship.¹⁵¹ Thanks to this relaxed approach to censorship most newspapers were still able to report negatively on aspects of the war, some even going as far as to actively campaign against the Government and Lord Kitchener (Minister for War).¹⁵² The press enjoyed so much power during the war a plot by the Press Barons Lord Northcliffe and Lord Beaverbrook was carried out using newspapers to discredit the Government resulting in the removal of Asquith as Prime Minister and the appointment of Lloyd George as his replacement.¹⁵³

However, one area where censorship was strongly enforced was on the front itself both on land and at sea, Lord Kitchener and Winston Churchill had agreed that there was to be no press reporters present on either the front or at sea.¹⁵⁴ This resulted in the starvation

¹⁴⁹ Chatterton, E. K. (1932). *The Big Blockade*. Hurst & Blackett. P. 15

¹⁵⁰ Monger, D. (2012). The Development of Wartime Propaganda and the Emergence of the NWAC. In *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain: The National War Aims Committee and Civilian Morale* (pp. 17-36). Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. P. 19

¹⁵¹ Ibid P. 19

¹⁵² Horne, J. (Ed.). (2010). *A Companion to World War I*. P. 408

¹⁵³ Horne, J. (Ed.). (2010). *A Companion to World War I*. P. 410

¹⁵⁴ Thompson, J. L. (2013). *Politicians, the press, and propaganda : Lord Northcliffe and the great war, 1914-1919*. P. 31

of information in regard to the war's conduct for the press. Due to Churchill's denial of reporters at sea the conduct and effectiveness of the blockade were unknown to the general public. Several newspapers, mainly belonging to Northcliffe, were able to circumvent censorship rules by reprinting or quoting articles from other countries newspapers that were not subject to censorship such as the United States.¹⁵⁵ Following the removal of Asquith the role of the press started to shift, Lloyd George was more perceptive of the role that the press could play both in the war and in politics and as such appointed both Press Barons into the Government.¹⁵⁶ Further, changes to the role of the press were exemplified by the establishment of National War Aims Committee (NWAC) in August 1917. NWAC was set up in response to Government fears that the domestic situation of the war was deteriorating and that continued censorship and propaganda, under the eye of the NWAC, was the best way to calm this fear through influencing public opinion of the war.¹⁵⁷ NWAC took over propaganda duties from Wellington House, the home of the Propaganda Bureau, whose responsibilities were to hire writers and others involved in entertainment to produce propaganda for the British public.¹⁵⁸ By the onset of the 1918-1919 extension period the press was still subject to both the NWAC and DORA censorships, but thanks to the privileged Government positions of the Press Barons many of their newspapers were still able to report negative aspects of the war. Despite being within a government appointed position Northcliffe continued to be critical of the Government and its conduct of

¹⁵⁵ Ibid P. 35

¹⁵⁶ Boyce, D. Harmsworth, Alfred Charles William, Viscount Northcliffe (1865–1922), journalist and newspaper proprietor. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Boyce, D. Aitken, William Maxwell, first Baron Beaverbrook (1879–1964), newspaper proprietor and politician. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁵⁷ Monger, D. (2012). The Development of Wartime Propaganda and the Emergence of the NWAC. In *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain: The National War Aims Committee and Civilian Morale* (pp. 17-36). Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. P. 18

¹⁵⁸ Sanders, M. (1975). Wellington House and British Propaganda during the First World War. *The Historical Journal*, 18(1), 119-146.

the war. Several other newspapers who had been allowed to publish dissenting articles in regard to the government and the war at its outbreak continued to do so even after Lloyd George had strengthened censorship.

This chapter seeks to take the current historiography and use it to expand the understanding of the role of the press in the planning and management of the blockade. By making use of the biographical works of Lord Grey¹⁵⁹, Admiral Fisher¹⁶⁰, The Viscount Cecil of Chelwood¹⁶¹, and Admiral Dudley De Chair¹⁶² in combination with works of the history of the administration and military running of the blockade, submitted with Chatterton's work, this chapter will argue that the press played a decisive role in influencing the management and planning of the blockade and that the concerns of public opinion fuelled the blockade's constant expansion and strengthening.

This chapter aims to provide a critical analysis of the blockade and blockade policy throughout the war, it will examine how the declining influence of international law was replaced by strategic focus on winning the war and the portrayal of the 'barbarism' of Germany in breaking international laws. The chapter will also analyse how public opinion regarding blockade policy changed other time and how it reacts to this decline of the influence of international law specifically focusing on how fears of angering neutral nations such as the United States influenced their reactions. In pacifist circles a focus on

¹⁵⁹ Otte, T. G. *The Foreign Office Mind : The Making of British Foreign Policy, 1865–1914*, Cambridge University Press, 2011. .

¹⁶⁰ Halpern, P. (2010). Fisher, John Arbuthnot, First Baron Fisher (1841–1920), Naval Officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁶¹ Ceadel, M. (2011). Cecil, (Edgar Algernon) Robert Gascoyne- [known as Lord Robert Cecil], Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (1864–1958), politician and peace campaigner. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁶² Hamilton-Edwards, G. (2011). Chair, Sir Dudley Rawson Stratford de (1864–1958), naval officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

international law was replaced by growing ideas of humanitarianism as a basis for international solidarity. The chapter seeks to achieve this by examining how the blockade was managed and portrayed in the press and who was in charge of running it throughout the war, while also examining any key changes in blockade policy and analysis of why these changes took place.

It will begin with an analyse of the debates surrounding blockade policy and the Declaration of London between 1909 and 1914. Focusing on the debates in the Houses of Parliament as well as the position and arguments of the Government, the Royal Navy and the Admiralty. It will then proceed to look at the outbreak of the war and the founding of the blockade, particular focus is placed on Winston Churchill, Lord Grey, the Foreign Office, and the Admiralty as these individuals and groups were the responsible for the blockade and its impacts at the very start of the war. This section also looks at the debates between those mentioned above as to what direction blockade policy should follow. These debates continue to be an area focus as the chapter moves onto look at the year 1915 but as the war progresses and the blockade does not strengthen more groups become involved in the debate including the Royal Navy and several Admirals. As the chapter moves its focus to 1916 there was a clear shift in blockade policy and with it an equally large shift in the debates surrounding blockade. The creation of the Ministry of Blockade signifies this shift. The Ministry, under Lord Cecil, rapidly removes the conflict between the Admiralty and Foreign Office and provides a new arena in which debate of blockade policy could take place. Furthermore, the Ministry brings with it the professionalisation of the blockade which mirrors the professionalisation of the press, propaganda and other areas that deal with public opinion taking place at the same period. All of this change creates a definitive split in public opinion surrounding blockade the likes of which is only comparable to that of 1919.

By the start of the war both public and political opinion was still favouring international law and the agreements made under it however, with the professionalisation of the blockade combined with the erosion of international law due to German unrestricted submarine warfare and other atrocities opinion shifted away from international law in favour of strong and decisive blockade policy. The focus of 1917 shifts towards the American entry into the war and the change it brings. With there no longer being any reason to focus on restricted use of blockade in order to preserve good relations with the US so too there was no longer a need for the focus of public opinion and propaganda concerned with the US and as such there was a shift in how public opinion was managed towards promoting a more aggressive form of blockade so that by 1918 blockade policy was the most effective arm of the military.

Pre-war Debates on the Declaration of London.

To understand why the British blockade was so disorganized it is important to understand the immediate context of the outbreak of war and the events that had taken place after the end of the 1908 London Conference and 1909 London Declaration. Despite the massive support for the London Declaration, which was signed by all the parties present at the London Conference, the Declaration was never ratified by a single government.¹⁶³ Several nations made attempts to ratify the Declaration but failed to do so prior to the outbreak of the Great War.¹⁶⁴ However, preceding the outbreak of the Great War several countries had made agreements to adopt the Declaration and follow its legal framework, such as Italy and Turkey during their war in 1912.¹⁶⁵ In Britain the Declaration was never

¹⁶³ Cox, M. E. (2019). *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*. Oxford University Press. _P. 21

¹⁶⁴ Ibid P. 21

¹⁶⁵ Ibid P. 21

fully adopted. The House of Commons had approved a bill committing the country to the Declaration however, this bill was not approved by the House of Lords.¹⁶⁶ This was the start of problems for the planning of the blockade, as the Declaration had not been ratified there were some confusion over the legality of the use of blockade. With the legality of different types of blockade in question there were some attempts on the international stage to push through the implementation of the Declaration at the outbreak of war, notably the United States requested the various nations in the war to abide by the Declaration.¹⁶⁷ Several nations agreed to abide by the Declaration, but the British refused to accept all of the terms of the Declaration, this led several other nations to follow the British lead and also refuse including Russia and France. Britain did however agree to follow the Declaration when ‘practicable’ or at least accept it in part.¹⁶⁸ This somewhat half acceptance of the Declaration created issues not only from a legal perspective but also within the Admiralty. Following the Declaration, the Admiralty had been preparing to integrate its protocols however, when the bill was defeated in the Lords there was a crisis of strategic thought within the Admiralty.¹⁶⁹ The Admiralty had become a major source of support for the Declaration, and this was due to two main reasons: the first being political as by the outbreak of the war most of the members on the Board of the Admiralty were Asquith-elected officials.¹⁷⁰ The second reason being that the Admiralty was in a state of confusion over how a modern blockade of a continental power would work.¹⁷¹ This contributes to the problem of trying to create a policy of blockade prior to the outbreak of war. While the

¹⁶⁶ Ibid P. 21

¹⁶⁷ Cox, M. E. (2019). *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*. Oxford University Press. [P. 21](#)

¹⁶⁸ Ibid P. 21

¹⁶⁹ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. [P. 41](#)

¹⁷⁰ Ibid P. 41

¹⁷¹ Ibid P. 41

Houses of Parliament were debating the contents of the Declaration several arguments in favour of a policy following the Declaration and against it were presented.¹⁷² These debates revealed the split opinions in Britain over the Declaration which some viewed as weakening the Royal Navy's abilities. These split opinions spilled out of Westminster and soon the country at large were discussing blockade in the press and through other forms of public expression. These split opinions revealed the inconsistent ideas of the government on a policy of blockade and thus explain the reason why, at the outbreak of the Great War, the Royal Navy was so underprepared to implement a blockade on Germany and it is here, in examining these debates, that the analysis of the blockade has to begin.¹⁷³

Debates in the House of Commons began almost immediately following the signing of the Declaration of London in February 1909. The M.P. Leverton Harris, who went on to be in charge of the Foreign Office's Restriction of Enemy Supplies Department and Under-Secretary to the Ministry of Blockade, led the charge in the Commons against the Declaration.¹⁷⁴ In April 1909 Harris addressed the Commons summing up the position of the oppositions anxieties over the concessions made in the Declaration stating it was

doubtful if a nation that claims to be supreme upon the seas (Britain) ... has ever gained anything by making a compromise and by giving concessions. Concessions, in my experience, are invariably made by the strong in favor of the weak.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷² Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 35

¹⁷³ Ibid P. 41

¹⁷⁴ Ede, H., & Brodie, M. Harris, (Frederick) Leverton (1864–1926), politician and art collector. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁷⁵ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 35

Seeing as this statement came at the height of the naval arms race with Germany it is no wonder it found considerable support throughout the nation. Previous M.P. and noted naval scholar Thomas Gibson Bowles, in May 1909, wrote a response to the Declaration that followed similar arguments to that of Harris.¹⁷⁶ Bowles was a free trade Conservative until 1907 when he briefly joined the Liberals until 1911 when he returned to the Conservatives.¹⁷⁷ Bowles fluctuation between the parties shows, in part, how complex and sometimes overlapping the politics of the time were especially it regard to free trade. Bowles was an authority on international and maritime law, he published several works on the topic, notably *Maritime Warfare* (1878), *The Declaration of Paris of 1856* (1900), and *Sea Law and Sea Power* (1910). Bowles used his position at a number of press outlets to print media arguing his points on the blockade to the public at large.¹⁷⁸ An early example of this came in June 1909, in the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, within a report on the decisions made at the London Naval Conference Bowles was quoted as describing the Declaration as “most unfortunate.”¹⁷⁹

This was the start of public interest in the debates surrounding the blockade and London Declaration. The main focus of the debates surrounding the Declaration started in 1911 when the bill was put on the floor to debate the classification of food.¹⁸⁰ It was not until these debates started that the government finally stepped in to defend its bill and the Declaration. It was the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Thomas McKinnon Wood, who

¹⁷⁶ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 35

¹⁷⁷ Cochrane, A., & Matthew, H. Bowles, Thomas Gibson (1841–1922), politician and newspaper proprietor. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid

Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 35

¹⁷⁹ Naval Agreements. (10th June 1909). *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 2. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/GR3217291832/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=9e1c02ac>

¹⁸⁰ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 36

came to the government's defence. Wood advocated for the Declaration as he believed it protected British trade from being declared absolute contraband and he believed the issues of food were a nonfactor as most food was imported in British ships and therefore considered contraband regardless of status.¹⁸¹ Wood's defence of the Declaration was illustrated in an address he gave at the City Liberal Club in London in February 1911. In this address, reported on in the *Manchester Guardian*, Wood was advocating for the Declaration to be ratified on the grounds that,

If Great Britain, after taking a leading part in the negotiations, after prevailing upon two Conferences to up to views on many points of high importance, were not to see her way to ratify the instruments creating the International Prize Court and the rules formulated by the Declaration of London it was clear that the result must be a serious set back to the development of the principle of international agreement, for which this country would be held responsible throughout the world, and that the influence of Great Britain in that direction would be gravely and lastingly impaired.¹⁸²

This defence depicts the mood of the Government when it came the Declaration. The focus and language demonstrate that the concern among the Government with regards to not ratifying the Declaration were based on Great Britain's reputation as a world power and as a world leader in peace. The Government was appealing to the public's patriotism in an attempt to persuade them of the importance, not just of the Declaration, but also that, of international law, arbitration and world peace. Earlier that same month Bowels made a similar appeal to the people at a public meeting of the Imperial Maritime League, however here Bowels appealed to patriotism in the Navy rather than Britain's role as a world leader of peace. Bowels was quoted as saying:

What had been proposed was that we should not use the strength of the Navy when we had it. For nearly 300 years the military nations of the Continent had made similar attempts to do what had now succeeded or partially succeeded, attempts not to diminish the naval power of Britain, but so to shackle it by conventions

¹⁸¹ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 36

¹⁸² THE DECLARATION OF LONDON: ADVANTAGES GAINED FOREIGN UNDER-SECRETARY'S DEFENCE. (11th February 1911). *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/declaration-london/docview/475222594/se-2?accountid=11526>

and arrangements and new proposals of the law of the sea as to render it practically incapable of being exercised for its proper purpose.¹⁸³

Bowles made the argument that by ratifying the Declaration the Government were weakening the Navy thus allowing the Continental powers to achieve something that they were not able to achieve in warfare, something to which the public would have been opposed.

The majority of debates were concerned with the vulnerabilities of Britain should she come under blockade herself; they largely neglected how the Declaration affected Britain's ability to conduct a blockade.¹⁸⁴ As such, they largely neglected the severe limitations that the Declaration placed on the Royal Navy and its ability to impose a blockade. This neglect hampered any attempts to plan a blockade policy as any policy would be omitting from its structure the agreements made under the Declaration. The government not only admitted to this weakness but also to not properly considering its effects as they believed a continental power could subvert a naval blockade anyway by importing from its neighbouring countries. This gross neglect of what Britain was losing was attempted to be justified by the government who believed that, as Britain was an island, it had more to lose to a naval blockade than a continental power did.¹⁸⁵ This statement may have made sense at the time it was made but hindsight has shown it be not only erroneous but favoured a continental power more than they stated. This was a point raised in the Commons by M.P. James Mason who supported the Declaration apart from its effect on food blockades.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸³ DECLARATION OF LONDON: MR. GIBSON BOWLES AND THE NEW DANGERS. (3rd February 1911). *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/declaration-london/docview/475218296/se-2?accountid=11526>

¹⁸⁴ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 36

¹⁸⁵ Ibid P. 37

¹⁸⁶ Ibid P. 37

These complaints finally started to shift the focus of the debates towards how Britain would conduct a blockade of its own should war break out. M.P. Bolton M. Eyres-Monsell, realising that the debate was starting to gain traction outside of Parliament, wrote a pamphlet which asserted that the Declaration weakened the Royal Navy's power of blockade.¹⁸⁷ The aim of the pamphlet was most likely to put pressure on the Government from public scrutiny. However, instead of taking the issues raised by Eyres-Monsell into account or trying to implement a policy of blockade that would have addressed these issues the Government, again represented by McKinnon, simply restated its position on the Declaration and again repeated that what it had given up was not as important as to what it had gained.¹⁸⁸ Clearly, the Government were not too concerned with either the arguments made by Eyres-Monsell or the reaction of public to his pamphlet. Actually, the government believed, wrongly, that the Declaration did not affect the navy's ability to conduct a blockade, this short-sighted opinion affected the Admiralty's ability to create a solid blockade policy as it put its politically appointed board at odds with sailors within the Royal Navy, notably Captain Faber who on 3rd of July voiced his concerns on the Royal Navy's now limited powers of blockade, his speech concluded that an offensive blockade against a continental power would be useless if the bill passed.¹⁸⁹

The Royal Navy, also realising the power of the people to influence Government opinion, took their arguments outside of Parliament and used newspapers, such as the *Daily Mail*, to make their case direct to the British public.¹⁹⁰ The *Daily Mail* was owned by Lord Northcliffe and is associated with the Conservatives and the right wing, at the time it was

¹⁸⁷ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 37

¹⁸⁸ Ibid P. 38

¹⁸⁹ Ibid P. 38

¹⁹⁰ British Naval Opinion. (29th of April 1911). *Daily Mail*. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1866479090/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=94e693b6>

edited by Thomas Marlow who was considered to be a Conservative sympathiser.¹⁹¹ Given its right wing affiliations it is expected that such a paper would be against the liberal ideals of international law and unsurprisingly support any move which appeared to weaken the power of the Navy. This was what the paper did in April 1911 when it printed an article claiming that British Naval Opinion thought that the Declaration 'Ought not to be ratified'.¹⁹² The paper clearly shows its own position towards the Declaration at the end of the article where it states, 'it would therefore be more prudent, in the opinion of many Admiralty experts, to avoid any temptation to a breach of the Declaration of London by leaving it unratified.'¹⁹³ The *Daily Mail* tried to influence public opinion on the Declaration by using, in its view, expert opinion to show its weaknesses. This was an astute use of the press by the Admiralty to galvanise support against the Declaration. The Admiralty had recognised the power of public opinion and was attempting to weaponize it against the ratification of the Declaration.

This attack finally spurred the bill's biggest sponsor and the primary British proponent of the Declaration, Lord Grey, to defend the bill. Grey's arguments differed little from those of McKinnon, he again stated the bill did not diminish the power of a blockade and that it only effected the rights of neutrals. However, unlike McKinnon, Grey took his arguments further and explained that he believed that agreeing to the Declaration was the right move from a foreign policy standpoint and stated that many within the navy and civil service agreed with him.¹⁹⁴ Grey believed that, by putting his and the nations faith in

¹⁹¹ Fyfe, H., & Morris, A. Marlowe, Thomas Henry (1868–1935), journalist. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁹² British Naval Opinion. (29th of April 1911). *Daily Mail*. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1866479090/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=94e693b6>

¹⁹³ Ibid

¹⁹⁴ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 38

international law, any future conflict would be easier to resolve through peaceful means. These conflicts between the government, notably Grey, and the Royal Navy, excluding the government appointed Board of Admiralty, made the possibility of creating a unified and agreed policy of blockade impossible. The bill on the Declaration passed the Commons on 3rd July, however it was quickly vetoed in the Lords. This left Britain in legal limbo when it came the Declaration, although it had not ratified the Declaration it had signed and as such it still held some responsibility to its contents.

Why did the Admiralty agree to the Declaration of London and the stripping of most of the Royal Navy's most powerful weapon? The primary reason the Admiralty agreed to the Declaration was due to the lack of understanding on how a modern blockade would work by the First Sea Lords. The first, First Sea Lord during the Declaration period was Admiral John Fisher (1904-1910), Fisher's tenure was dominated by technological change the most influential of these on his opinions on blockade was the developments of sea mines and torpedoes.¹⁹⁵ Fisher believed that these weapons and their ability to defend a nations shoreline made the possibility of a close blockade impractical.¹⁹⁶ These ideas, combined with Fisher's other naval reforms, explains why he was in favour of the Declaration, if Fisher truly believed blockades to be impractical in the future then it would have taken Grey very little to convince Fisher that the Declaration gave more power to Britain than it took. These ideas are most apparent in the 1910 naval plans which excluded the concept of a close blockade and made no direct mention of the possibility of a distant blockade due to it being potential illegal already under the Declaration of Paris 1856.¹⁹⁷ These issues were only

¹⁹⁵ Halpern, P. Fisher, John Arbuthnot, first Baron Fisher (1841–1920), naval officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid

¹⁹⁷ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 45-46

compounded by the additional restrictions placed on them by the London Declaration, as such all mentions of economic warfare at sea were vaguely worded and unclear.

Furthermore, the Admiralty planning was further compounded by the advice of its naval attaches recommending that economic disruption would encourage the German fleet to face the Royal Navy at open sea in battle to remove the disruption, Fisher believed that a distant blockade might achieve this but was unsure.¹⁹⁸ This uncertainty remained when Fischer left the Admiralty and was replaced by Sir Arthur Wilson, who was unsuited to the politics of the role and as such provided no real opposition to the government's plans to push on with its focus on international law instead of military powers.¹⁹⁹ Wilson did call for close blockade of Germany and the capture of islands in the north of Germany to help facilitate this but by this point the damage was done, the General Staff had already committed itself to ground operations as its focus and the ideas of blockade remained vague and unplanned.²⁰⁰ Wilson was unable to argue his point and his poor political ability saw him rapidly replaced by Francis Bridgeman who, with the support of the First Lord of the Admiralty Winston Churchill, reverted their planning back to concepts of Fisher's distant blockade.²⁰¹ They proposed a very distant blockade would still be effective enough but their focus was more geared towards drawing the Germans into an open naval battle than in actually blockading Germany and disrupting its economy.²⁰² The economic side of a blockade was almost completely disregarded in the 1913 planning for a potential war of Germany, where again the focus was placed on its ability to draw the Germans out.²⁰³

¹⁹⁸ Ibid P. 48

¹⁹⁹ Lambert, A. Wilson, Sir Arthur Knyvet, third baronet (1842–1921), naval officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

²⁰⁰ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 49

²⁰¹ Ibid P. 49

²⁰² Ibid P. 49

²⁰³ Ibid P. 49

Bridgeman was later replaced by Prince Louis of Battenberg in 1912, at this point Churchill had established himself as the primary power within the Admiralty and navy.²⁰⁴ Prince Louis made no major changes to the plans of blockade and, as a result of growing anti-German sentiment, was not First Sea Lord for long enough to have any real effect.²⁰⁵ Therefore, when war broke out the only plan for a blockade of Germany was the one Churchill had come up with, the plan that severely underestimated the power of the naval blockade and had been thrown together just over a year prior to the war.

The Outbreak of War 1914.

Churchill's plan may have given some structure to the Admiralty's concept of a blockade but it was too little too late; when war broke out there was some mobilisation of the navy's forces to begin incorporating the plan, but little was understood of its aims. Historians have debated how effective the blockade was in the opening months of the war, but the overall consensus now is that the vague policy resulted in an unprepared and ineffective blockade.²⁰⁶ The Admiralty needed to completely reassess its blockade policy if it was to have any hope of damaging the German war effort, but a new issue quickly presented itself, Lord Grey. When calls for the strengthening of the blockade were starting, it can be seen through his actions that, Grey was reluctant to abandon his morals and turn his back on his ideals of international law.²⁰⁷ As the policy of blockade was the product of three different government departments: the Admiralty, the Foreign Office, and the Board

²⁰⁴ Hurd, A., & Kiste, J. Mountbatten, Louis Alexander, first marquess of Milford Haven [formerly Prince Louis of Battenberg] (1854–1921), naval officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

²⁰⁵ Hurd, A., & Kiste, J. Mountbatten, Louis Alexander, first marquess of Milford Haven [formerly Prince Louis of Battenberg] (1854–1921), naval officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

²⁰⁶ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 58

²⁰⁷ Ibid P. 58

of Trade, Grey's approval was necessary in order to change any aspect of the blockade.²⁰⁸ However, Grey was quickly brought to see the need for a stronger blockade as both the Foreign Office and Admiralty realised their theoretical blockade was unable to deal any damage to the German war effort or draw the German High Seas Fleet out into an open conflict.²⁰⁹ The initial blockade, which used the Dover Patrol and the Tenth Cruiser Squadron to close off the North Sea and Channel, was able to halt German merchant ships for inspection but this was a slow process that the Squadron were not cable of maintaining.²¹⁰ As such Admiral of the Tenth Cruiser Squadron, De Chair, made a concentrated effort to clearly define what a distant blockade was and what the roles of his squad were.²¹¹ De Chair's intervention in the chaotic blockade policy was repeatedly over ruled by the Admiralty who continued to misunderstand the purpose of a blockade, they maintained the blockade was a secondary purpose to the Squadron and that the strategic objectives of the navy took precedent.²¹² This was reinforced by the Foreign Offices and Grey who were still struggling to reconcile their advocacy for the London Declaration with the war.²¹³ Change in the approach to the blockade policy came slowly but, ironically, was strongly encouraged by the Germans who were breaking international law in their conduct of warfare and the laying of sea mines.²¹⁴ These disregards for international law convinced Grey that his beliefs had been misplaced, this is most evident in his response to the US request, in late 1914, to follow the Declaration of London where Grey responded that Britain would only partially

²⁰⁸ Dehne, P. The Ministry of Blockade during the First World War and the Demise of Free Trade, *Twentieth Century British History*, Volume 27, Issue 3, September 2016, Pages 333–356,

²⁰⁹ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 59

²¹⁰ Ibid P. 60

²¹¹ Ibid P. 60

²¹² Ibid P. 61

²¹³ Ibid P. 62

²¹⁴ Ibid P. 61

follow the Declaration.²¹⁵ This dramatic change in the Foreign Office's policy opened the possibility for the navy to expand its blockade policy. Soon after this change the Admiralty expanded its orders to the Tenth Cruiser Squadron to begin inspecting neutral trade as well, these neutrals were then compelled to guarantee that its goods would not be given or sold to Germany.²¹⁶ This major change policy was acceptable to Grey as it did not violate neutral rights while guaranteeing that trade with Germany was being disrupted. However, the promises of the neutrals were not always kept, this encouraged the Foreign Office to abandon the halting of neutral trade which the Royal Navy completely ignored.²¹⁷ The return of conflict between the Foreign Office and the navy remained until 1916, Grey's fear of angering the neutrals and ultimately turning them against Britain dominated his approach to blockade policy as well as the Government's approach to the management of public opinion, especially when the US were involved.²¹⁸ This was much to the anger of the navy who were now calling for an expansion in the blockade and openly calling for the disregard of neutral rights as they viewed a powerful blockade was more important than maintaining good relations with neutral countries.²¹⁹ These proposals were adopted by the Admiralty by the end of 1914, however, neutral rights still had to be respected and allowed to pass even after an inspection; in response to this Lord Grey asserted that the continuous voyage rules must be followed in order to appease the neutral states.²²⁰ However, several neutral countries saw Grey's assertion as a concession and attempted to apply diplomatic pressure and force Britain to give more blockade-based concessions in favour of their trade. These

²¹⁵ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 61

²¹⁶ Ibid P. 63

²¹⁷ Ibid P. 65

²¹⁸ Ibid P. 66

²¹⁹ Ibid P. 67

²²⁰ Ibid P. 71

attempts to force Britain's hand led to a series of negotiations between Britain and the neutral countries namely Sweden, The Netherlands, and Denmark.²²¹ The Admiralty at this point was aware of the need of a strong blockade and following the recommendations of the navy, mentioned above, knew how best to implement a strong blockade, as such the Admiralty was putting pressure on the Foreign Office to stand its ground within these negotiations.²²² However, Grey still held onto his beliefs in both international law and the weakness of a blockade in winning a war, as such the negotiations resulted in little change and the failed good faith agreements, mentioned earlier, remained.²²³ Given the limited access of the press during the war there is limited comment by any group be it women or legal scholars during the conflict years.

The Continuation of Failures 1915.

The continuous failures of the Foreign Office to recognise the importance of a blockade and its attention on maintaining good relations with neutral countries means it can be stated that by the start of 1915 the blockade had been a failure. It had failed to restrict the flow of goods into Germany, it had failed to cause significant economic or social disruption and it had failed in its ultimate goal of drawing the High Seas Fleet out into an open conflict. 1915 was a continuation of these failures. 1915 has been continuously portrayed in history as a year of stalemate. This is also true in regard to the blockade, the only notable changes to the blockade that take place in 1915 was the continued improvement of its administration, that began in late 1914 and the response to German

²²¹ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 71-79

²²² Ibid P. 71-79

²²³ Ibid P. 79

unrestricted submarine warfare.²²⁴ The press response to German submarine warfare throughout the war was focused on how Germany's use of submarines were in breach of international law and as such were portrayed by the press and propaganda as 'outrages' that Britain had to 'confront'.²²⁵ In July 1915 the *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser* reported on the announcement of British Order of Council about Britain's own blockade. Within this article the paper clearly states that the expansion of the British blockade was justified as 'retaliatory'.²²⁶ The report goes to explain how the German Submarine campaign was illegal and, as such, allowed the British to follow suit in their own blockade response. The article states:

The blatantly illegal blockade of British coasts by German submarines called for some drastic measures against German oversea commerce, and our blockade, though extended beyond what law and practice of nations have hitherto recognised, is at least based on the use of effective force, fraught with no danger to life, and calculated to hasten the end of the war.²²⁷

This quote provides a clear example of how British newspapers not only portrayed the German submarine blockade but how they portrayed the continuous, and illegal, expansion of the British blockade. By portraying the British expansion as a reaction to the already existing illegal German blockade the paper were preserving a perspective of British moral superiority, a tactic that British propagandists had been using throughout the war.

Nevertheless, another overhang from 1914 also undermined these improvements, namely the negotiations of the Foreign Office with neutral powers. Lord Grey continued to put his faith in international law and his focus on not making more enemies.²²⁸ As such

²²⁴ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 83

²²⁵ The Submarine Campaign. (8th of February 1917). *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS151455816/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=45e1ee84>

²²⁶ Retaliatory Steps in Blockade. (24th July 1915). *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 8. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/GR3216970953/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=e25f2ffe>

²²⁷ Ibid

²²⁸ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 83

there was increase in tensions between the Royal Navy and the Foreign Office so much so that 1915 can be summed up as the year of internal conflict. The main source of conflict centred around the neutral guarantee set up and protected by the Foreign Office, as a result of these guarantees the vast majority of shipping intercepted by the blockade were later released and allowed to travel freely to their destination.²²⁹ This created amount of resentment from the Royal Navy as even though the primary blockade squadron (Tenth Cruiser Squadron) had limited contact with enemy ships they did lose a number of ships and crews to bad weather, sea mines, and hostile crews from boarded ships.²³⁰ They were frustrated that they were dedicating time, ships, and even losing crews to a blockade that was being almost completely undermined by the Foreign Office.²³¹ Further frustration came in 1915 when Germany announced its policy of unrestricted submarine warfare, which presented a new threat to the navy. The British response to this was a decree stating that this policy broke international law and as such the British were justified to also break international law in response.²³² This response was a major change to the blockade policy, which until now had been centred on international law, the new blockade essentially targeted all German goods going through a neutral power. The Foreign Office objected to this policy and insisted that neutral rights still had to be respected, this again led an offsetting of the policy as goods intended for Germany on neutral ships were still allowed to go after a brief detention.²³³

Another, attempt to strengthen the blockade in 1915 came following French protest at the weakness of the British blockade: they insisted that Britain tighten its blockade by

²²⁹ Chatterton, E. K. (1932). *The Big Blockade*. Hurst & Blackett. P 178

²³⁰ Ibid. P 150

²³¹ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 85

²³² Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 87

²³³ Ibid P. 88

introducing a ration system which meant that countries could import a set amount of goods anything after that could be deemed as going to Germany and as such be open to seizure.²³⁴ This measure was supported by the British but its implementation was hampered by the Foreign Office who, in an attempt to preserve strong neutral relations, insisted it must be a voluntary ration system and as such undercut the whole initiative.²³⁵ Overall, 1915 sees a continuation of the issues presented by the Foreign Office and the frustrations of the navy to these issues. These issues came to a head at the end of 1915 with members of the navy fully criticising the role of the Foreign Office in the blockade and demanded that the navy be allowed full control of the blockade, these criticism did not go unheard and came to be the dominant reason that in 1916 the British establish the Ministry of Blockade.²³⁶

The Year of Change 1916

1916 can be easily characterized as the year of change. The establishment of the Ministry of Blockade, the Battle of Jutland, and the appointment of David Lloyd George as Prime Minister all brought with them major changes to the blockade policy. The Ministry of Blockade was established in early 1916 with the hopes it would be able to address and resolve the many conflicts between its predecessors the Foreign Office and the Admiralty, Lord Grey had requested the Ministry's creation personally as he felt blockade policy was beginning to take over his other responsibilities.²³⁷ At its head was the influential Lord Robert Cecil, previously the Under-Secretary to the Foreign Office. Some have argued as

²³⁴ Ibid P. 95

²³⁵ Ibid P. 90-99

²³⁶ Dehne, P. The Ministry of Blockade during the First World War and the Demise of Free Trade, *Twentieth Century British History*, Volume 27, Issue 3, September 2016, Pages 333–356,

²³⁷ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 120

Lord Cecil was from the Foreign Office the Ministry of Blockade is simply a continuation of the Foreign Office's control over the blockade, 'the Ministry of Blockade under Lord Robert Cecil - a Ministry which co-ordinated the activities of the various governmental agencies concerned with blockade and was under the nominal control of the Foreign Office.'²³⁸ This a sentiment that was shared by others and the press, upon this announcement an 'observer' wrote into the *Daily Mail* to express their concern that the Ministry of Blockade was associated with the Foreign Office stating:

The Foreign Office a "non-combatant" Department, in the strict meaning of the word, as against the other three, which are combatant in their very nature: but also the prejudices of that office and, if I may say so, it's bad record, are felt in many quarters, to be a very great objection to this connection with the all-important business of blockade.²³⁹

This quote shows why the shaping of public opinion is so crucial in regard to the blockade, following two years of stagnation and failure under the control of the Foreign Office public opinion was turning against the leadership in charge of the blockade. This quote demonstrates this point, in fact public opinion was so shaken by the failures of the Foreign Office that they no longer wanted any association between the Foreign Office and the new Ministry of Blockade. As such, we see public opinion in a role reversal making use of the press to apply pressure on the government to actively distance control of the blockade from the Foreign Office and its staff.

However, given the dramatic tightening and strengthen of the blockade experienced as a direct result of the Ministry of Blockade it is hard to support this view when it was evident that the Foreign Office and Lord Grey were staunchly against such measures. Eric Osbourne

²³⁸ Maisel, E. (1989). The Formation of the Department of Overseas Trade, 1919-26. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 24(1), 169-190. P. 170

²³⁹ Observer. (5th April 1916). Foreign Office and Blockade. *Daily Mail*, 4. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1865673555/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=f13bf3a9>

in fact argues that the creation of a separate Ministry was an attempt to remove blockade policy from the Foreign Office's (And Grey's) hands,

In November 1915, Grey received a vote of no confidence through Asquith's decision to exclude him from the government's War Cabinet deliberations. This choice was due in part to the attacks on the government over Grey's blockade policy. This act effectively divorced diplomacy from strategy. The creation of the Ministry of Blockade was an example of this fact as Grey largely relinquished control of the blockade.²⁴⁰

When the Ministry of Blockade was set up it contained a large selection of staff from the Foreign Office, some from the Admiralty, some from the Board of Trade, and the War Trade Department.²⁴¹ The Ministry was successful at overcoming the major hurdle of the blockade by being able to mediate the divisions between the Foreign Office and the navy. Lord Cecil's personal friendships with British admirals is largely to thank for that.²⁴² The Ministry was a rapid success quickly introducing new blockade policies that focused on promoting neutral trade with Britain at the threat of losing British trade if they were to trade with Germany, new and more efficient screening of neutral vessels that allowed pre-screened vessels to pass the blockade much quicker, and Navicert passports that allowed US trade to pass through unhindered.²⁴³ All of these new innovations in effect created a tighter blockade by limiting trade with Germany through neutral countries while simultaneously easing the effects the blockade was having on neutral trade through the blockade, essentially in one year the Ministry of Blockade was able to take the conflicting aims of the Foreign Office and the navy and find a solution in the middle ground.²⁴⁴ Furthermore, the Ministry was able to strengthen the blockade by working even closer with the French to ensure a coordinated

²⁴⁰ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 120

²⁴¹ Dehne, P. The Ministry of Blockade during the First World War and the Demise of Free Trade, *Twentieth Century British History*, Volume 27, Issue 3, September 2016, Pages 333–356,

²⁴² Ibid

²⁴³ Ibid

²⁴⁴ Ibid

and genuinely allied blockade of Germany.²⁴⁵ Much of this growth and improvement to the running of the blockade has been contributed to the staff of the Ministry or more specifically to the diversity of the staff who came from several departments and outside the government all together.

In his article, Phillip Dehne accredits the Ministry of Blockade's staff for much of its success.²⁴⁶ Eric Osbourne also points out the importance of having a diverse staff overseeing the blockade policy, they point out the inclusion of Rear Admiral Dudley De Chair (commander of the blockade's Tenth Cruiser Squadron) as an advisor to the Ministry of Blockade.²⁴⁷ Osbourne credits this as a major success for the administration of the blockade as it is the first time that those involved directly involved in enforcing the blockade were giving the opportunity to comment on and debate the blockade policy.²⁴⁸ Osbourne also follows this up by stating 'Not only was this a move toward greater effectiveness, but it represented also an acceptance by the Foreign Office that all was not well concerning the blockade.'²⁴⁹ Again Osbourne believes that the new Ministry showed a weakening of the Foreign Office's influence over blockade policy. Of particular relevance to this thesis, both historians also give notable credit to the new Ministry's intelligence gathering abilities. Dehne discusses how much of the Ministry staff were dedicated to intelligence gathering and analysis, they state that the Ministry was able to gather sufficient intel on the Germans economic state, based on intelligence of what was being shipped into the country gathered

²⁴⁵ Dehne, P. The Ministry of Blockade during the First World War and the Demise of Free Trade, *Twentieth Century British History*, Volume 27, Issue 3, September 2016, Pages 333–356,

²⁴⁶ Ibid

²⁴⁷ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 121

²⁴⁸ Ibid P. 121

²⁴⁹ Ibid P. 121

from cable transmissions, in order to best inform blockade policy.²⁵⁰ Osbourne credits the Ministry's intelligence gathering for providing the future of blockade policy. Osbourne states that 'This information, however, held out only the hope for success in the future against Germany's economic situation.'²⁵¹ Osbourne described how Swiss informants' information on Germany's economic situation showed that the blockade was having a strong impact on German foodstuffs and as such the blockade provided the possibility of having a real strategic impact on Germany instead of just drawing the German High Seas Fleet out.²⁵² It was at this point that British thinking was beginning to shift towards the possibility that the blockade could disrupt Germany enough to have a major impact on the war effort, even though German public was not showing the impacts of the blockade the economy was.

Surprisingly, Dehne makes no reference in their work to what is without doubt the most monumental change to the blockade policy throughout the conflict and that is the Ministry of Blockade overturning the Declaration of London. The London Declaration had been the be all and end all of blockade planning since its signing in 1909, the Declaration was used as the legal basis for any policy planning right up until the outbreak of war. Even during the conflict, the Declaration formed much of the Foreign Office, Lord Grey, and Admiralty's guide for the running of the blockade until 1916. Lord Cecil recognised that the Declaration had been a limiting factor on the expansion of the blockade at the outbreak and early years of the war and as such made the decision early in his role as Blockade Minister to repeal it. Osbourne also recognised that Lord Cecil's decision to repeal the Declaration was a major shift in blockade policy they stated that

²⁵⁰ Dehne, P. The Ministry of Blockade during the First World War and the Demise of Free Trade, *Twentieth Century British History*, Volume 27, Issue 3, September 2016, Pages 333–356,

²⁵¹ Osbourne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 127

²⁵² *Ibid* P. 127

In July the minister of blockade accomplished the last legislative feat of the year that crowned the new direction taken by British foreign policy since February. Cecil finally got rid of the Declaration of London, which was the embodiment of Lord Grey's policy and a source of great embarrassment to Britain.²⁵³

This change in policy that removed the 'embodiment' of the previous administrator's policy has to be really focused upon and analysed almost in its own right. To begin with it is important to address why 1916 was the ideal time to repeal the London Declaration. At the outbreak of the war a combination of the Foreign Office's desires and the US's meant that following the London Declaration as close as feasibly possible was the only plausible course of action. From this point onwards Britain had forced itself to into keeping the London Declaration a key part of all blockade policy. 1916 however, provided a perfect storm of events for not only moving away from the Declaration but freeing Britain from its shackles all together. Thanks largely to the German declaration of unrestricted submarine warfare, the concept of following international law despite the enemy's contraventions was a hard position to defend. Ultimately it can be argued that the German's attempt to blockade Britain brought about its own downfall at the hands of the British blockade. Other things that contributed to the justification of repealing the London Declaration was the fact that Britain had by this point already negotiated its own set of blockade rules with the vast majority of neutral countries and as such had already voided much of the Declaration.²⁵⁴ Another, key point to consider is that as the Declaration was never ratified fully it was already in a precarious position legally. Cecil viewed the repealing of the Declaration as a way to silence opposition coming from navy in regard to the limits forced upon it.²⁵⁵ Overall, the perfect situation for removing the Declaration presented itself in 1916 and Cecil took the opportunity with vigour. In May 1916 Cecil was able to overcome

²⁵³ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 127

²⁵⁴ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 128

²⁵⁵ *Ibid* P. 129

some opposition to the repeal from Lord Grey and convinced the French to join the British in returning to the 1856 Declaration of Paris as the key guide to blockade policy. Overall, 1916 saw some of the biggest changes to the blockade throughout the war. The introduction of the Ministry of Blockade, the repeal of the London Declaration, and the growth of Allied blockade cooperation all mean that by the end of 1916 it can be clearly stated that an effective blockade was in place against Germany.

1917 The Turning Point.

In any analysis of the Great War 1917 is always a year of key focus, the declaration of war from the US against Germany and the Central Powers combined with the two Russian revolutions and ultimate loss of Russia as an ally had major influences on how the war played out. With 1916 having resolved much of the issues regarding the blockade in Britain it was these two outside influences that have the most effect on the running of the blockade in 1917. The introduction of the US into the war, with their powerful navy, meant that the blockade of Germany could not only be tightened but also that fears of possible upsetting the US with a strict blockade policy were now alleviated. The US entry to the war brought with it much hope and promise but it also came with the same administration issues that Britain faced early in the war. The US entered the war with more understanding of how to operate with the conflict thanks to its late admission. Before looking at the primary external factors it is worth noting the final internal change to blockade during the conflict, that was the establishment of the War Cabinet in late 1916. There is some disagreement as to whether the blockade was affected by the establishment of the War Cabinet as the Ministry

of Blockade did not sit with the War Cabinet but there some changes that came with the new Cabinet that helped the blockade.²⁵⁶

The first major change was the removal of Lord Grey as Foreign Secretary in late 1916, this step by Lloyd George was a clear sign that, with Asquith, the old ineffective administration was out and a new more war focused one was in.²⁵⁷ This may only appear to be a symbolic change, but it certainly had a real connotation, it was a clear sign that the way of Grey, the London Declaration, and the rights of neutrals were no longer underpinning or having any effect on blockade policy. Lord Cecil was now free to continue his aggressive blockade policy without any real fear of opposition from those within the government as the removal of Grey was a symbolic nod to Cecil of Lloyd George and the War Cabinet approval of his work and vision for the blockade. Another administrative change that the War Cabinet took which effected the blockade was the removal of Admiral Jellicoe from the Grand Fleet, which oversaw the blockade, and his replacement with Admiral David Beatty. Jellicoe had been the primary source of conflict regarding the blockade coming from the navy. Jellicoe had been very critical of the government's handling of the blockade within the Admiralty and a vocal critic both within the navy and to the public.²⁵⁸ Again, this was a symbolic change, but the removal of a critic allowed Cecil more freedom to carry out his plans for the blockade. The next change that comes to the blockade is a minor blip in the historiography of the blockade but is notable for its foreshadowing of the future of the blockade. In late 1916 Greece mobilised its armed forces and threatened to join Germany and declare war on Britain if the blockade of continental Europe was not relaxed. The blockade had taken its toll on Greece

²⁵⁶ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 153

²⁵⁷ Robbins, K. Grey, Edward, Viscount Grey of Fallodon (1862–1933), politician, countryman, and author. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

²⁵⁸ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 154

and disrupted its economy. Britain's response to this was to call on the Greeks to demobilise their army and to strengthen blockade efforts to specifically target Greece, the British hoped this added pressure from the blockade would convince the Greeks to not join the war.²⁵⁹ This is the first known example of a blockade being used as a tool of diplomacy rather than war. The Greeks agreed to the British demands and also were ordered to give reparations to the British and her allies.

This major diplomatic success for the blockade paved the way for the extension of the blockade after the end of hostilities in 1918, the War Cabinet realised the power that the blockade had and that it could also be used as a form of diplomatic pressure to force better terms for the blockading party, which was what happened with Germany from 1918-1919. With the Germans continuing their policy of unrestricted submarine warfare there was little merchant shipping within the North Sea and the blockade continued to patrol with the aim of blockading Germany but also making sure that German submarines were not able to sail out and threaten trade in the Atlantic. At the start of 1917 the US remained the largest interference with the blockade, according to British Ambassador to the US growing resentment from businesses and the general US population meant that President Wilson was under pressure to see the war and blockade brought to a swift end.²⁶⁰ However, things were soon to change when in February the infamous Zimmerman Telegram was published in the US, the telegraph suggested that should US join the Allies Mexico should declare war on them. This telegram created a huge feeling of relief for Britain as after its publishing the US public opinion quickly shifted in favour of the Allies, many hoped this new fond favour could be capitalised upon to finally deal with the blockade's issues in regard to US trade.

²⁵⁹ Ibid P. 154

²⁶⁰ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 156

This telegram combined with growing anger from the public at US losses to the German unrestricted submarine warfare created the perfect set of circumstances for the US entry to the war on the Allied side. Other neutrals at this point were also looking more favourably towards the Allies including Sweden, Norway, and Denmark.²⁶¹

The US entry to the war in April brought hopes that with it would also come the tightening of the blockade. Until now the US had been the biggest leakage of goods from the blockade into Germany. However, the reality was far from this hope. Wilson made a key point in his public speeches of his reasoning for entering the war to be to free seas and for freer trade as just as Britain the US had signed and agreed to follow the London Declaration. Therefore, with the US entry to the war there was the return of the issues presented in Britain by Grey, but this time for the US to overcome. Throughout 1917 the US was slow to overcome these issues and join Britain in a complete embargo of Germany, it was not until July that Wilson announced a limited embargo, and a full embargo did not come until 1918. The US throughout 1917 continued to have only limited participation in the blockade and was insistent upon using the old Grey concept of rations for neutral powers to control trade. Wilson also was very open to subvert the blockade when he felt it was in Britain's humanitarian interests to do so as well as when the British public in the press were calling and fundraising for such actions, notably his work with The Commission for Relief in Belgium where Wilson allowed a shipment of food past the blockade to feed the starving civilians of the continent despite the risk the food could have been taken by the German army to feed its troops.²⁶² Overall, 1917 saw the US enter the war only to bring more issues for the

²⁶¹ Ibid P. 157

²⁶² Hertog, J. D. (2010) The Commission for Relief in Belgium and the Political Diplomatic History of the First World War, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 21:4, 593-613,

blockade then hope, 1918 saw many of these issues overcome and the eventual end to the war as a result.

1918 The End of Fighting but not Blockade.

1918 sees the end of armed conflict in Europe and signing of the armistice. As for the blockade this year can be seen as a continuation of previous year. Overall, the blockade remained one of the most strategic parts of the Great War and in 1918 it was able to cause sufficient economic and social distress so much so that the Kaiser was forced to abdicate and the calls in Germany for an end to the war were loud enough to be heard by the German Government. The US continued to slowly grow its participation within the blockade and as a result help the Allies create a tighter blockade. The only real issue for the blockade in 1918 was the lack of a unified blockade department overseeing the entire operation. This lack of cohesion created some disagreements surrounding US cargo still being examined and some other issues though these tensions were quickly resolved.²⁶³ However, the tensions brought to light the need for a combined administration in charge of the blockade. This idea had been under consideration since the start of war at the request of the French, but nothing had materialised, when the US started request the same thing the British were hesitant to comply and possibly risk weakening the near perfect blockade policy Cecil had been able to create in recent years.²⁶⁴ There were many disagreements on the creation of an Allied administration for the blockade as the British did not wish to weaken its position within the blockade and the US did not want to be in a subservient position to the British. However, despite reservations an international blockade administration was set called the

²⁶³ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 174

²⁶⁴ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 174

Allied Blockade Committee (ABC).²⁶⁵ The ABC was mainly made up of British statesman and as such was dominated by British decision making. Most of the British blockade offices were absorbed into the ABC but the blockade was now a truly an Allied effort and the once powerful Ministry of Blockade was a shell of its former self, this in fact led to Cecil's resignation as Minister for Blockade in 1918.²⁶⁶ The unified ABC saw the final transformation of the blockade into an all-powerful machine. With the full force of each nation now in the blockade, it was able to put more than enough pressure on neutrals to stop trading with Germany and ultimately put enough pressure on Germany to force their surrender.

Overall, the administration of the blockade was one of the most transformative sections of the British war effort in the Great War. The blockade went from a last-minute thrown-together policy to one of the strongest and most effective weapons within the Allied arsenal. The blockade had to overcome huge hurdles from international law as well as to internal conflicts to end up being a near perfect international administration with both exceptional economic power and diplomatic pressure. The blockade went from a memorandum issued by Churchill in 1914 to having its own Ministry and Minister, several departments within the Treasury and Foreign Office, and finally having its own dedicated international committee. No other aspect of the Allied war effort can claim to have undergone such a dramatic improvement in administration then the blockade. Likewise, very few can claim to have gone from almost symbolic and a wholly ineffective aspect of the war to the most efficient and effective measure in ending the war then the blockade. Due to the successful management of public opinion, discussion of the blockade's legality was minimised, and German breaches of international law were publicised and made the topics

²⁶⁵ Ibid P. 174

²⁶⁶ Ibid P. 175

of propaganda as to allow a more aggressive and effective blockade to take its place. The next section of this thesis seeks to provide a critical analyse of the reporting within newspapers on the blockade after the armistice and what these reports were aiming to do, it will also look at how these reports reflect the British public's opinion on the blockade at the time.

Chapter 3: 1919 The Continuation of a Peacetime Blockade and the Growth of Opposition.

By November 1918, the blockade had become one of the most effective and damaging arms of the Allied war effort. Several historians have even gone as far as to credit the blockade with winning the war.²⁶⁷ It was no coincidence that, during the peak of the blockade, Germany agreed to an armistice on the 11th November 1918.²⁶⁸ Germany had hoped the cessation of hostiles would also mean the ending of the blockade but, as seen with Greece in 1916, the Allies kept the blockade in place and used it as a tool of diplomacy in order to extract the best terms possible for the Allies in a peace treaty.²⁶⁹ This decision was seen throughout history as controversial in fact, the calling for the end of the blockade after the Armistice came almost immediately in Britain from several groups including; the Independent Labour Party and the Women's National Liberal Federation.²⁷⁰ Even some contemporary historians agree with these groups that the blockade should have ended with the signing of the Armistice.²⁷¹ Although these arguments surrounding the 1918-1919 continuation of blockade have existed from the start of the extension there is a serious lack of analysis of these debates within the historiography. In the past decade there has been a growth of interest in the blockade specifically from the historians of humanitarianism²⁷², but

²⁶⁷ Whalen, R. (1987). *The American Historical Review*, 92(2), 441-442.

²⁶⁸ Henig, R. (1998). *The Weimar Republic 1919-1933*. Chapter 1

Weitz, E. (2018). A Troubled Beginning. In *Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy, Weimar Centennial Edition* (pp. 7-40). PRINCETON; OXFORD: Princeton University Press. Chapter 1

²⁶⁹ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 173

²⁷⁰ The Blockade. (24th of April 1919). *Daily Mail*, 6. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1865114854/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=0a0bbcf>

"Raise The Blockade" Leaflets. (16th of May 1919). *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS153554096/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=80e9f653>

²⁷¹ Mayer, R. (2019) Noncombatant Immunity and the Ethics of Blockade, *Journal of Military Ethics*, 18:1, 2-19,

²⁷² Cox, M.E. (2015), Childhood Nutrition in The First World War. *The Economic History Review*, 68: 600-631.

Piller, E. (2016). German Child Distress, US Humanitarian Aid and Revisionist Politics, 1918–24. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 51(3), 453–486.

Hindley, M. (2000) Constructing Allied Humanitarian Policy, *The Journal of Holocaust Education*, 9:2, 77-102,

many have not focused on the period between November 1918 and July 1919, those that have either mention it as part of a study of the entire blockade or focus more on the legality of the decision. The use of the press is completely neglected within the historiography of the period. During the extension period of the blockade, several organisations, such as the Fight the Famine Council, acted as pressure groups and used the press in an attempt to mobilize public opinion over the extension of the blockade.²⁷³ As the press not only reported events but also published commentary pieces and even letters sent to their editors they could be used as effective tools of propaganda. Therefore, this chapter seeks to provide an analyse of this use of the press in the 1918-1919 period and its effects on public opinion surrounding the blockade extension. By this point the nature of the press was slightly different, although there was still DORA the press becomes more critical of the Government than it had been during the war. From the onset of the extension various pressure groups both in favour of or opposed to the extension of the blockade started to astutely use the press in Britain to influence public opinion. Humanitarian groups such as the Fight the Famine Council made use of the press to argue for its immediate lifting, as well as several pacifist opposition groups including the Independent Labour Party and Women's National Liberal Federation. In response to this, the Government and those that supported the continuation of blockade, such as Millicent Garrett Fawcett, also took to the press to make their case to the British public and influence their support for the blockade's extension. This chapter will analyse this use of the press by continuing its focus on the historiographical topics of opposition to the blockade from radical liberal and left-wing political groups such as the Independent Labour Party and Liberal Women's Groups,

²⁷³ Boucher, E. (2011). Cultivating internationalism: Save the Children Fund, public opinion and the meaning of child relief, 1919–24. In Beers L. & Thomas G. (Eds.), *Brave new world: Imperial and democratic nation-building in Britain between the wars* (pp. 169-188). London: University of London Press.

including the response of other women's groups such as the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) in order to comment on the gendered aspects of the blockade as well as the splits within the suffrage movement over the outbreak of war by pacifist elements. Finally, it will analyse how humanitarian groups like the Fight the Famine Council also made use of the press to campaign for the lifting of the blockade and the sending of relief to Germany. However, this chapter will not continue the study of legal scholars discussing the blockade as during this period they are noticeably absent from these discussions and commentary on the legal aspects of the blockade. Instead, opponents of the continuation of the blockade were more likely to call upon political, economic and primarily humanitarian reasons. This is likely due to the loss of faith in international law as a moral ideal given the disregard of international law from both sides during the war. As the war raged on and the British broke blockade law and the German's submarine warfare did the same legal arguments lost their effect and were replaced by moral arguments based on humanitarian ideals. The historiography addresses the decline in commentary on international law by legal scholars. British arguments in favour of war started as claiming Britain 'had come to the defence of the "Sanctity of Treaties and the rights of small nations" lest "they count for nothing before the threat of naked force".'²⁷⁴ However, as the war progressed, arguments between defending actual laws was blurred with arguments of defending "moral laws" and thus moving arguments away from legal scholars towards moral

²⁷⁴ Fox, Jo: Making Sense of the War, in: 1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War, ed. by Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 2014-10-08.

Kramer, Alan: Naval Blockade (of Germany), in: 1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War, ed. by Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 2020-01-22.

authorities.²⁷⁵ This chapter intends to complete these analyses and examinations by providing a concise examination of the nature of wartime press and commenting on the tone of several newspapers reporting on the blockade during the extension period.

The chapter will then intently analyse three distinctive news articles that were published during the blockade's extension examining how they report the blockade's extension, its effects, and most importantly the articles' use of language aimed at mobilizing public opinion surrounding the blockade's extension. The first article that is analysed in this chapter is titled 'The Blockade' published by *The Times* in early December 1918, the article is a reprinting of two letters both written by Millicent Garrett Fawcett. The letters are a blistering attack on the German populace, who have asked Fawcett for help lifting the blockade, and a clear attempt by Fawcett to influence British public opinion in favour of the blockade's extension.²⁷⁶ The second article is titled 'The Blockade. Liberal Women's Pleas for Germany' and is published in the *Daily Mail* in late April 1919. The article is a summary of a plea from a delegation of Liberal Women to the Government to lift the blockade on Germany and send aid to the starving nation and the response from Mr Bonar Law on behalf of the Government.²⁷⁷ Both sides of the argument presented in the article are prime examples of the astute use of the press to mobilize public opinion. The final article is "'Raise the Blockade" Leaflets. National Labour Press Fined' published in *The Times* in mid-May 1919 a report on a series of court cases against several individuals, organisations, and

²⁷⁵ Fox, Jo: Making Sense of the War, in: 1914-1918-online. International Encyclopedia of the First World War, ed. by Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 2014-10-08.

²⁷⁶ FAWCETT., M. G., & FAWCETT., M. G. (2nd December 1918). The Blockade. *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS151718786/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=d643c85c>

²⁷⁷ The Blockade. (24th of April 1919). *Daily Mail*, 6. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1865114854/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=0a0bbcf>

printing houses being sued for printing and distributing leaflets calling for the ending of the blockade and describing the damage it had done to German civilians.²⁷⁸

Methodology for Selections of Primary Sources.

The articles chosen above were selected in order to answer the central question of what influence did international law played on public and political opinion in 1899-1919. All three articles address the extension of the blockade past hostilities, they also provide a breadth of opinion within the women's movement over a period of time. The articles were selected from a large number of newspaper articles from the time that discuss the blockade extension. As stated throughout this work, the impact of the extension of the blockade on public opinion past the armistice is an area of the historiography that has been neglected, as such this chapter seeks to address this neglect. Due to the changing nature of press censorship following the end of hostilities after the armistice, censorship was weakened and as such the press was more willing to criticise the Government and its blockaded policy. The newspapers display the views of the right and left wings of the press, and patriotic politics versus humanitarian appeals. These themes have been analysed throughout this thesis and for that reason have also been examined in this chapter. The first article contains two letters written by Millicent Garrett Fawcett who was a leading figure in the women's suffrage movement and a patriot during the war, the second article is a summation of a plea from a women's liberal delegation, and finally the last article looks at a court case against several feminist-pacifist organisations and individuals including Eglantyne Jebb of the Fight the Famine Council and a Mrs Barbara Ayrton Gould of the Women's International League. All

²⁷⁸ "Raise The Blockade" Leaflets. (16th of May 1919). *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS153554096/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=80e9f653>

three show how appeals were made to the British public on the humanitarian aspect of the suffering in Germany due to the blockade and how pro-blockade responses focused on hard politics and the pragmatic need to maintain the blockade for peace. The final reasons these articles were chosen is the dates they were published. The date range these articles cover is December 1918 to May 1919, this is key to the analysis of the blockade extension as it not only shows a breadth of opinion, but it shows how opinions surrounding blockade changed over time. This is especially important as when the blockade was first extended there was still limited information as to the situation in Germany as a result of wartime measures, however as time went on and more information became available there was a shift in opinion. It is at the point that the suffering of German civilians was made more known to the British public that newspaper articles began to shift away from discussions of international law and the need of the blockade to be maintained and the rise of arguments for removing the blockade and appeals made to the humanitarian aspect of the issue. This chronology is key to understanding how these articles demonstrate the decline of international law in press coverage and the rise of the humanitarian appeal that replaced it.

These articles are representative of the wider public debates of the time as the blockade's extension was covered in all the major newspapers of the day not just the two papers selected for analysis. Four of the major papers at the time, which report on the blockade extension from very different positions, were *The Times*, *Daily Mail*, *Labour Leader*, and *Manchester Guardian*. These newspapers had some of the highest readership of newspapers in the period and many of their respective articles were reprinted in smaller local papers throughout the country. The *Labour Leader* was a left-wing paper associated with the Independent Labour Party and socialist groups. And as such much of its reporting reflected the opinions of socialist thinking. During the blockade's extension period the

Labour Leader published an article calling the extension of the blockade an attempt by the British to 'to frustrate and suppress the revolutions of the exasperated peoples of Europe.'²⁷⁹ This report on the blockade is to be expected from a far-left paper reporting on the British actions at the time, especially when the recent Russian Revolution and British intervention in Russia is considered. This combined with the revolutions taking place in Germany in the face of defeat that were socialist or communist in nature creates a view to the *Labour Leader* and its readers that the British was using the blockade to pressure Germany to put down these revolutions and follow democratic principles. Although the other three newspapers are also critical of the blockade extension they do not comment or focus on the socialist uprisings in Germany.

The liberal *Manchester Guardian* also commented critically on the blockade. The famous *Guardian* reporter Evelyn Sharp wrote a report for the paper on the effects the blockade's extension was having on German civilians.²⁸⁰ The article, titled 'The Blockade's Effect on German Children', summarises a report from a trusted source about how the blockade has caused widespread starvation in Germany and as a result German children were suffering from mental, physical, and psychological issues.²⁸¹ The article, similar to the *Labour Leader*, is highly critical of the Government for its continuation of the blockade however, unlike the *Labour Leader* the *Guardian* makes use of emotive language in order to create an image of the suffering taking place in Germany. No doubt the aim of this article was to persuade its

²⁷⁹ *Labour Leader*. (1918). *The International Crisis*. Available: <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk/viewer/bl/0002734/19181205/017/0003>. Last accessed 04/08/2021.

²⁸⁰ Angela V. John (2003) 'Behind the locked door': Evelyn Sharp, suffragette and rebel journalist [1], *Women's History Review*, 12:1, 5-13,

²⁸¹ Sharp, E. (4th of July 1919). THE BLOCKADE'S EFFECT ON GERMAN CHILDREN: PHYSICAL AND MORAL DETERIORATION. *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/blockades-effect-on-german-children/docview/476223013/se-2?accountid=11526>

readers of the terrible condition in Germany and encourage them to call for the lifting of the blockade through its emotive language.

The next two papers, *The Times* and *Daily Mail*, also make use of emotive language in order to influence public opinion both papers were owned by Lord Northcliffe and as such have similar readership and perspectives. Both newspapers are associated with the Conservatives and the right wing. However, it is interesting to note that both papers appear to have different interpretations of the blockade's extension. This is unusual as both papers were not only owned by Lord Northcliffe, but both were also edited by pro-Conservative editors who commonly published the view of Lord Northcliffe instead of their own (Thomas Henry Marlow edited the *Daily Mail* and Geoffrey Dawson edited *The Times*).²⁸² By looking at *Times* articles from the period it appears that *The Times* had a close relationship with the Government, compared to other newspapers, having regular access to Ministers and Secretaries of States for comment within their articles which may explain the difference in opinion on the blockade. This, however, does not explain the question why newspaper reports on the blockade being published by very similar newspapers have such different tones and stances in regard to the matter.

The Historiography of 1919.

As previously stated, there is a lot of debate surrounding the extension of the blockade past the Armistice until the signing of the Treaty of Versailles. These debates have ranged right across the historiography concerned with the blockade from more general

²⁸² Neville, P. Dawson [formerly Robinson], (George) Geoffrey (1874–1944), newspaper editor. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.
Fyfe, H., & Morris, A. Marlowe, Thomas Henry (1868–1935), journalist. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

debates surrounding the blockade to specific studies looking at the legality of the extension. Newspapers from the period offer a unique prospective on these debates, although looking back with hindsight historians can make comments on how terrible the effects of the blockade were or discuss whether the blockade broke the law at the time, but it is important to consider what the views and ideas of those at the time had in regard to the blockade. Historians such as Mary Cox now have access to German archives which tells a great deal about how the growth and development of children was effected by the blockade but those in charge of the blockade at the time and the general public in Britain at the time did not have access to such data.²⁸³ They only had access to the newspapers in Britain and some translated newspapers from the continent with which to form their own opinion in regards to the blockade, and it is this opinion that needs to be considered when trying to understand why there was such support for the blockade during the time period and why these opinions changed over time as evidenced in *The Times* article. The opinions expressed in the newspapers by those in government such as Bonar Law offer an insight into the political ideas as to why the blockade was extended and as such offer a commentary on the historiography concerned with this question. Eric Osbourne has studied the blockade in detail and his primary work dealing with the blockade, *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*, has a chapter that deals with the years 1918 to 1919 and contains a section that makes commentary on the political reasons for extending the blockade. Osbourne states that 'the Lloyd George government began to ask the views of both military and political officials on the best course to pursue in the event of an armistice. The studies received advocated maintaining the blockade until a final peace was signed.'²⁸⁴ As discussed

²⁸³ Cox, M. E. (2019). *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*. Oxford University Press.

²⁸⁴ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 181

at length in the previous chapter by 1918 the administration of the blockade was a major political and military affair with its own ministry and international committee. As such any decisions for extending the blockade past an end of hostilities was a largely political decision. Osbourne claims that there are two main reasons that the government decided to extend the blockade: the first reason is of a military concern that the Germans could use the cessation of the blockade during an armistice to resupply and ship in materials that could then be used to restart the war with a strengthened Germany, the second concern was political. Osbourne states that Lloyd George and his cabinet wished to keep the blockade as a tool of peace and as leverage in order to extract the most favourable terms for the Allies in the peace deal.²⁸⁵ It is interesting to note that these ideas are echoed in the *Liberal Women's Pleas* article by the response from Bonar Law. In the article Bonar Law states that the situation in Germany remains poor for four reasons: military, financial, shortages of shipping, and a lack of internal distribution infrastructure within Germany. The first reason given, military, is a clear a reference to what Osbourne called the military reason as well however, Bonar Law makes no direct reference to the 'political reason' the blockade remains. Although he does state 'on the signing of peace all restrictions would be removed' which is a hint that the government was trying to strong arm Germany into signing a peace deal that will be unjustly detrimental to Germany.²⁸⁶ Osbourne's closing argument on the matter is that the politicians at the time saw the Armistice as only a cessation of hostilities pending a peace deal and as such a state of war and the possibility of resumed hostilities

²⁸⁵ Ibid P. 181

²⁸⁶ The Blockade. (24th of April 1919). *Daily Mail*, 6. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1865114854/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=0a0bbcf>

still existed and it was this fear that in Osbourne's opinion that ultimately led to the decision to extend the blockade until peace was formally agreed.²⁸⁷

Osbourne refers to Historian Paul Vincent who also argues that it was psychological factors that led to the extension stating that 'the Allies were shell-shocked after the war and the decision to maintain the blockade was an irrational one that stemmed from their hatred of the Germans and fear that they might break the armistice.'²⁸⁸ The newspaper does not necessary reflect this 'hatred' of Germany but it certainly echoes the fears of a possible resumption of hostilities, which at the time was a legitimate possibility hindsight may now show that this was unlikely and ultimately untrue, however at the time, mostly due to a lack of trust and information, they were unaware of how weakened Germany really was and its inability to resume conflict.

Another, area of the historiography that the newspapers provide an insight into is the opposition to the blockade and how this opposition was treated in the news and received by the wider public. Opposition to the war on a whole was a common feature with the Independent Labour Party, the editor of the *Labour Leader*, a pro-socialist newspaper, went on to setup the No Conscription Fellowship to oppose conscription.²⁸⁹ A continuation of this Labour-based opposition can be seen in the article *National Labour Press Fined*. This article describes how the Labour press published a variety of leaflets that openly criticised the blockade and called for the lifting of the blockade in order to stop the suffering in Germany. Opposition to war quickly turned into opposition to the blockade. These groups used their opposition to the blockade to galvanise their political networks and associations

²⁸⁷ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 184

²⁸⁸ Ibid P. 184

²⁸⁹ Cecil, H., & Liddle, P. (1996). *Facing Armageddon : The first world war experience*. P. 697

to action and thus give the groups a purpose now that the war was over. One area of opposition worth its own section in the historiography is the humanitarianism response to the blockade. The articles provide an insight into some of the humanitarian responses to the blockade from the role of the Fight the Famine Council publishing leaflets through to the various women's groups campaigning for the end of the blockade, the articles provide not only information on how these humanitarian groups campaigned they also give examples of their arguments and even the structure of their organisation. There has been, in the last two decades, a growth in interest in the historiography concerned with humanitarianism, many of these works look at the boom of charities and humanitarianism in response to the Great War and the effects of the blockade. One such work is a chapter, by Ellen Boucher, titled *Cultivating internationalism: Save the Children Fund, public opinion and the meaning of child relief, 1919–24* which studies the role the media played on public opinion in the establishment of international charities and humanitarianism. Boucher makes the argument that the Fight the Famine Council was a pressure group more than a relief association and as such was more concerned with mobilizing the public.²⁹⁰ This argument made by Boucher is echoed by the article titled *National Labour Press Fined* where Miss Eglantyne Jebb, one of the founders of the Save the Children Fund and the Fight the Famine Council, is listed as one of the individuals fined for printing anti-blockade leaflets titled 'A Starving Baby.'

The newspaper articles looked at in this chapter lend themselves to a gendered analysis of the responses to the extension of the blockade and its effects by making comments on some women's, such as Millicent Fawcett, responses to the blockade and the opinions of

²⁹⁰ Boucher, E. (2011). *Cultivating internationalism: Save the Children Fund, public opinion and the meaning of child relief, 1919–24*. In Beers L. & Thomas G. (Eds.), *Brave new world: Imperial and democratic nation-building in Britain between the wars* (pp. 169-188). London: University of London Press. P. 174

various women's groups as well. Fawcett presents a gendered interpretation to the blockade as her comments touch on the historiography related not only to the splits within the suffrage movement but also on historical interpretations of international sisterhood as it was a German women's group that reached out to her in the first letter. Also mentioned above is Miss Jebb, a leading figure within the Fight the Famine Council, an example of one of many leading women involved in international charities and opposition to the blockade in the period. The historiography of gender looking at both international humanitarianism and opposition to the blockade and war is extensive. Ingrid Sharp is one of the leading gender and pacifist historians examining how the blockade not only affected individual women but women's groups and movements. In one of her collaborative works, with Matthew Stibble, Sharp argues that, despite German women's groups claims, some women's groups in Allied countries were trying to and campaigning for the lifting of the blockade and the ending of starvation in Germany.

The newspaper articles considered in this chapter reinforce this argument. Primarily the article titled *Liberal Women's Pleas for Germany* is a major reinforcement for Sharp's argument, it provides an example of one women's group petitioning one of the highest members of the British Government (Mr Bonar Law was the Leader of the House at the time) for them to end the blockade in Germany and provide relief for the starving continent. Another, area of the gendered historiography that newspapers provide insight into is the split within the suffragist movement at the outbreak of the war. There is an argument among historians of suffrage and gendered pacifism that a state of international sisterhood existed in the Great War period. Many of these historians use the examples of women's

groups calling for peace and the end of blockade as evidence of this.²⁹¹ However, these arguments are not absolute and fail to take into the account the large number of women and women's groups that abandon these ideals of international sisterhood in favour of their nationalist duties to their respective countries in a time of war. An example of this can be seen in the article titled *The Blockade* where leading suffragist Millicent Fawcett prints her scathing reply to a German appeal to her sense of international sisterhood and attacks the people of Germany for their own culpability in the establishment of the blockade. She does this by stating the blockade is as severe as it is due to the aggression of the German's unrestricted submarine warfare and the large loss of life caused as a result of it. This provides a clear example against any arguments that the Great War had a positive increase or even a continued level of international sisterhood.

This article also provides an insight for those who study how the Great War impacted women's groups and movements, at the outbreak of the war there was a split within many groups over whether to support the war or oppose it in favour of peace and internationalism. One group which exemplifies this is the Nation Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS). Historian Jo Vellacott has written on the divisions within in NUWSS during the Great War, one of their works, *Feminist Consciousness and the First World War*, looks at the publications made by those who supported peace and pacifism. Their work refers to an agreement, made within the NUWSS to not comment on events related to the war or the pacifist movement while the division within the group was resolved. Vellacott argues that the pacifist wing was angered by Millicent Fawcett, the leader of the NUWSS, for her constant public comments that were seen by the pacifist wing as being pro-war.²⁹² The

²⁹¹ Sharp, I., & Stibbe, M. (Eds.). (2017). *Women activists between war and peace : Europe, 1918-1923*. P. 102

²⁹² Vellacott, J. (1987). *Feminist Consciousness and the First World War*. *History Workshop*, (23), 81-101. P. 82

article *The Blockade* provides an example of one of these pro-war publications. In the article two letters, both writing by Fawcett, are published. The first letter is to the editor of *The Times*, the publisher of the article, in which Fawcett refers to a plea from a German Women's group for help in lifting the blockade. Fawcett dismisses the plea from the beginning referring to it as 'meticulous... propaganda'.²⁹³ The second letter in the article contains the response she sent to the German group where Fawcett states that the suffering they face in Germany is a product of their own making. She goes on to list several reasons as to why she holds this view namely the death of Allied merchants to German Submarines.²⁹⁴

The Blockade by Millicent Garrett Fawcett

The first article, *The Blockade* by Millicent Fawcett published on the 2nd of December 1918, contains several key words or phrases that are highly emotive even by her own admission. It is already established that Millicent was an ardent supporter of the war and the blockade, also it is already known that she was the leader of NUWSS and throughout the war had been facing a rebellion from a minority group within the NUWSS who supported peace and pacifism, which was an early indication of the section of the women's movement's move away from international law and towards humanitarianism. Furthermore, Boucher has already established that groups like the NUWSS were using newspapers as a way of campaigning/lobbying support for their causes or views.²⁹⁵

²⁹³ FAWCETT., M. G., & FAWCETT., M. G. (2nd of December 1918). *The Blockade*. *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS151718786/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=d643c85c>

²⁹⁴ FAWCETT., M. G., & FAWCETT., M. G. (2nd of December 1918). *The Blockade*. *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS151718786/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=d643c85c>

²⁹⁵ Boucher, E. (2011). Cultivating internationalism: Save the Children Fund, public opinion and the meaning of child relief, 1919–24. In Beers L. & Thomas G. (Eds.), *Brave new world: Imperial and democratic nation-building in Britain between the wars* (pp. 169-188). London: University of London Press. P. 174

Therefore, it is safe to assume that the purpose of this article was to persuade others to also oppose the lifting of the blockade. This is evidence that, during the early extension of blockade when this article was published, Fawcett was still interpreting the blockade within an international law perspective in her view this extension of blockade past the armistice in a time of peace was not only necessary but also legal as Germany had broken international law first with its unrestricted submarine warfare and therefore allowed Britain to also break by the law by extending the blockade in order to ensure peace. Fawcett achieves this by stating that a plea for the lifting of the blockade was ‘propaganda which they (The Germans) believe likely to improve their own position.’²⁹⁶ With this line alone Fawcett had already begun to achieve her aim, by referring to the pleas for help as ‘propaganda’ she has challenged the principal concept behind the request for lifting the blockade, Germany’s starvation. As previously stated, due to wartime censorship information with regard to Germany’s starvation was limited and as such Fawcett was able to cast doubt on this assertion creating the view among those reading the article that the situation in Germany was not as dire as the Germans were claiming and as such there was no real need for the lifting of the blockade. Fawcett was taking advantage of the British public’s mistrust of Germany, which, as stated earlier, was a principal driving force behind extending the blockade past the Armistice till a peace deal has been signed.²⁹⁷ This demonstrates that even as late as December 1918 humanitarian appeals were still been challenged within the British press and that *The Times* still believed that international law was still one of the main driving forces governing maritime blockade. Fawcett is showing a highly intuitive understanding of how to manipulate public opinion for her own ends, by taking the public’s

²⁹⁶ FAWCETT., M. G., & FAWCETT., M. G. (2nd of December 1918). The Blockade. *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS151718786/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=d643c85c>

²⁹⁷ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 184

fear and projecting it against the lifting of the blockade the article is able to go beyond merely casting doubt on the need to lift the blockade but will undoubtedly make the British public frustrated that Germany was trying to improve its own situation when, in the British opinion, they caused the war and suffering in the first place. This created a feeling of injustice within Britain as far as Germany was concerned. Additionally, Fawcett appears to have been aware of this feeling as later in the article she makes several comments to the German's own complicity within the causing of the blockade. Fawcett states that

The people of this country are not vindictive, but they have a strong sense of justice, and I believe the whole country practically supports the policy of the Allied Food Council, which is first to supply the necessities of Allied and liberated peoples, then of the neutrals, and next of enemy countries.²⁹⁸

Fawcett's direct reference to justice will play a factor in affecting peoples public opinion surrounding the lifting of the blockade for several reasons. Firstly, it reminds the public that Britain was "on the just side" of the war and as such was entitled to look after itself primarily before others. This idea is supported further when Fawcett refers to the Allied and liberated peoples as being the first in line for supplies as far as the Allied Food Council was concerned. Furthermore, Fawcett's reference to Germany as an enemy country was a reminder to the public that they are still the enemy, no peace has been signed yet, and as such are not as prioritised for supplies. This concept of moral justice was closely linked to international law as Britain believed it had followed international law whereas Germany had broken it therefore making Britain the "just country". These assertions by Fawcett will have contributed to the mood of public opinion more against Germany and certainly have reinforced the point that the blockade should not be lifted to help them. Fawcett goes even further with the blame tactic; she states that as a number of ships were lost to the German

²⁹⁸ FAWCETT., M. G., & FAWCETT., M. G. (2nd of December 1918). The Blockade. *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS151718786/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=d643c85c>

submarine warfare were carrying food 'the policy of your own Government has further reduced the world supplies of food.'²⁹⁹ Again, Fawcett used moral arguments based on concepts of international law to further her argument against the lifting of blockade. Paradoxically, later in the article Fawcett again tries to cast doubt as to whether the need for food in Germany was legitimate or not, undermining her previous point that there was a current lack of food, she does this by mentioning Herbert Hoover who from the start of the war was concerned with the possibility of famine due to the war.³⁰⁰

Fawcett states that in Hoover's 'expert' opinion Germany had plenty of food left from the autumn harvest and that 'there should be no danger of starvation for any part of the population for many months to come.'³⁰¹ Again, by trying to cast doubt as to the German need for food Fawcett was trying to persuade public opinion that there was no need to lift the blockade as Germany has plenty of food already, despite claiming earlier that food shortages were the fault of the Germans. Overall, the first article provides a great deal of insight into how some influential women, such as Fawcett, could, through their position and influence, use newspapers and the media to influence public opinion surrounding blockade and persuade the general public that the establishment of a blockade that extended beyond an end of hostilities was not only justified but that German pleas to help their starving nation after the fact was exaggerated and potentially false. The article provides a clear example of how beliefs in international law governing blockade were still prevalent in December 1918 and that the shift towards humanitarianism had not yet taken

²⁹⁹ FAWCETT., M. G., & FAWCETT., M. G. (2nd of December 1918). The Blockade. *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS151718786/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=d643c85c>

³⁰⁰ GEORGE, J. (1992). Another Chance: Herbert Hoover and World War II Relief. *Diplomatic History*, 16(3), 389-407.

³⁰¹ FAWCETT., M. G., & FAWCETT., M. G. (2nd of December 1918). The Blockade. *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS151718786/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=d643c85c>

place. Despite the letter from the German women's group stating otherwise there were few sources to confirm that Germany was starving and that the lifting of the blockade was needed. Furthermore, it also provides insight into how the suffrage movement and how the women's movement continued to get involved in politics after the war and used the press to do so.

The Blockade. Liberals Women's Pleas for Germany.

The second article, titled *The Blockade. Liberal Women's Pleas for Germany*, was published by the *Daily Mail* in April 1919. The article contains the summarised arguments and quotes of several influential liberal women trying to convince the Government to lift the blockade of Germany as well as response from a member of the Government. As with the first article it's already been recognized that these women's groups were using newspapers as a means of spreading their propaganda in an attempt to influence public opinion to coincide with their own views. It is established that the Women's National Liberal Federation was one of several women's groups that were campaigning for the lifting of the blockade in an attempt to alleviate the starvation crisis that was gripping Germany at the time. As such it is believable that the women's comments in this article are trying to persuade others to join them in calling on the government to lift the blockade. The clearest example of this is a quote taken directly from Lady Bonham Carter which states 'the blockade is diffusing over large parts of Germany "that extremity of hunger and hardship which has proved itself elsewhere to be the forerunner of anarchy and chaos."' ³⁰² This quote is the most interesting argument for the lifting of the blockade because it is using to

³⁰² The Blockade. (24th of April 1919). *Daily Mail*, 6. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1865114854/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=0a0bbcf>

most recent developments in Germany as evidence of the need to lift the blockade. As mentioned earlier this article was published on the 24th of April 1919 at the time Germany was going through a period of intense internal conflict. Lady Carter was clearly referring to these internal conflicts in her quote and was claiming that the root of these issues was the hunger crisis that was crippling Germany at the time. This illuminates a key turning point in the debates surrounding the lifting of blockade, Wendy Carter was now making a direct humanitarian appeal against hunger rather than forming arguments on the basis of international law. This is because Lady Carter would have known what was taking place in Germany at this time as several other women's groups were publishing translated articles of foreign newspapers that covered the various uprisings and other conflicts taking place in Germany at the time.³⁰³ This explains why there was a turning point between the publishing of this article and the earlier article by Fawcett, for, due to the growth of information coming out of Germany of the humanitarian crisis that was happening there was a better understanding of the humanitarian crisis that Germany was facing and as such women's groups were able to start using emotive humanitarian language as a means to galvanise support for the lifting of blockade instead of using arguments based on international law.

It has already been stated that Germany had been facing multiple uprisings, revolutions and other civil unrest since the signing of the Armistice (known as the German Revolution) however, March and April, the months immediately prior to the publication of this article, had seen some of the most violent exchanges in Germany.³⁰⁴ Since the Armistice there had been several left wing uprisings in Germany notably the Spartacist uprising in

³⁰³ Boucher, E. (2011). Cultivating internationalism: Save the Children Fund, public opinion and the meaning of child relief, 1919–24. In Beers L. & Thomas G. (Eds.), *Brave new world: Imperial and democratic nation-building in Britain between the wars* (pp. 169-188). London: University of London Press. P. 173

³⁰⁴ Henig, R. (1998). *The Weimar Republic 1919-1933*. P. 8

early January as well as the establishment of several Soviet Republics in the German state of Bavaria and the city of Bremen.³⁰⁵ Since the Soviet Revolution in Russia in 1917 the west had become paranoid of the potential spread of communism around the world, as such it was very politically astute of Lady Carter to use these Soviet uprisings in Germany as the basis of her argument to the Government for the raising of the blockade.³⁰⁶ This argument will have also resonated with the British public at large who, thanks to British propaganda, were also fearsome of communism and its potential to spread.³⁰⁷ Therefore, it is safe to conclude that Lady Carter's arguments being reprinted in the newspaper will have affected public opinion surrounding the lifting of the blockade, many that read this article will have been scared of what could happen in Germany if the blockade remained in place and either continued to push the German populace into the arms of the Soviets or perpetuate an ongoing humanitarian crisis that Britain could have been blamed for. This argument will have resonated even more so with members of the women's movement who had read the translated newspapers of Germany, published in the Cambridge magazine and edited by Dorothy Buxton, and like Lady Carter were also aware of this growing political and civil turmoil ravaging Germany. The arguments of the remaining delegates to the Government to plea for the lifting are only briefly summarised, or in the case of Mrs Buxton completely omitted.³⁰⁸ This reinforces the argument that Lady Carter's viewpoint will have had the most impact on the public or at least the readers of the *Daily Mail*. This is because the author or editor of the article clearly believed that Lady Carter's point would make the largest impact on their readers and as such decided to publish it directly, if they did not believe that their

³⁰⁵ Kolb, E., & Kolb, E. (2004). *The Weimar Republic*. P. 11

³⁰⁶ Morgan, K. O. (1981). *The rise of socialism*. *History Today*, 31, 30.

³⁰⁷ Ibid

³⁰⁸ The Blockade. (24th of April 1919). *Daily Mail*, 6. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1865114854/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=0a0bbcfc>

readers would of been interested in what Lady Carter was saying they would have simply not bothered printing it like with the other delegates. Lady Carter was playing into the conservatism and anti-Bolshevism supported by the *Daily Mail* and her arguments linking social unrest and food shortages to a potential spread of communism will have made her comments more receptive to the *Mail* and its readers. However, Lady Carter's use of emotive appeals to people's humanitarian instincts will have made her comments resonate more with those who shared her humanitarian views and wished to see the suffering in Germany end.

The summarised arguments of the other members of the delegation are not anywhere near as emotive, persuasive, or astute as Lady Carter's. However, the response to the women's pleas from Mr Bonar Law are on par with those of Lady Carter. Like Lady Carter Mr Bonar Law's arguments show an astute understanding of both the situation in Germany and the political landscape in Britain and the Allies at large. This is evidenced in the list of reasons giving by Mr Bonar Law as too why the situation in Germany was so negative. Mr Bonar Law gives four reasons as for this: '(1) military; (2) financial; (3) the shortage of shipping; and (4) the absence of means for internal distribution in Germany itself.'³⁰⁹ This displays the political prowess of Bonar Law the last point shows his awareness of issues within Germany and how they are affecting the distribution of food but, unlike Lady Carter, he goes one step further and similar to the arguments made by Millicent Fawcett in the first article considers the larger geopolitical factors of the blockade. As with Fawcett, Bonar Law refers to the loss of available ships for moving food as a result of the war and the German submarine blockade. However, Bonar Law takes his arguments further than Fawcett and

³⁰⁹ The Blockade. (24th of April 1919). *Daily Mail*, 6. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1865114854/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=0a0bbcfc>

directly states that another reason the blockade was being kept in place was for military reason. As a member of the Government Bonar Law will have been aware of the advice the military gave Lloyd George in regard to keeping the blockade in place to prevent Germany having a chance of revival that could lead to the starting of hostilities again.³¹⁰ By printing this point in the newspaper there is a likely possibility that the British public would share this fear and as such support the Government's decision to maintain the blockade. This shows that, despite the growing calls for humanitarian responses combined with the growing information coming out of Germany over the hunger crisis, fears of the continuation of war still presided over those who were in charge of the blockade. Overall, the *Daily Mail* article provides an insight into how women's groups were trying to influence public opinion in favour of lifting the blockade and how they used their knowledge of the suffering in Germany in combination with a motive language based on humanitarian principles to make this argument. It also provides a glimpse into how the Government responded to these pleas and used the press to continue to persuade the public to support both the Government and its policies. Overall, this article illustrates that Britain was between concepts of international law governing blockade as a means to ensure a 'just war' and achieve international peace, and the new rhetoric of humanitarianism critiquing the effects of a blockade on a civilian population. A debate that is arguably repeated across the Twentieth and Twenty First Century in World War Two and other conflicts.

"Raise The Blockade" Leaflets. National Press Fined.

³¹⁰ Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*. P. 181

The final article, titled *"Raise The Blockade" Leaflets. National Labour Press Fined*, was printed in *The Times* on the 16th of May 1919. The article contains a report on a series of court cases of various groups, individuals and printing houses being sued for printing material that either violated the Defence of the Realm Regulations or were not approved by the Press Bureau. The article makes an interesting and potentially risky decision to print not only the title of the leaflet but also directly quote them and their contents. The article also contains the arguments made in defence of the publication of these leaflets providing an insight into the thoughts behind their decisions. The inclusion of these elements of the court case are interesting as just five months previously *The Times* had printed the Fawcett letters that were fiercely pro-blockade, but it is now printing the polar opposite and showing the arguments and pleas of those wanting to lift the blockade to their readers. The first leaflet quoted in the article it titled "What does Britain stand for?" the article quotes the following from the leaflet 'Starving babies, torturing women, killing the old. These things are being done to-day in Britain's name all over Europe. Shall it go on?'³¹¹ the National Labour Press were trying to convince others of the need to raise the blockade in order to prevent this injustice from taking place in Germany. This illustrates how the National Labour Press used humanitarian language to inform their arguments for the lifting of the blockade and made direct appeals to the public's humanitarian morals in an attempt to galvanise public support for the lifting of the blockade. This quote also demonstrates how language and public opinion had moved away from concepts of international law towards a purely humanitarian appeals. This is because more information was available by the time this article was

³¹¹ "Raise The Blockade" Leaflets. (16th of May 1919). *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS153554096/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=80e9f653>

published in May 1919 as to the state of Germany and the massive humanitarian crisis that was taking place at the time due to blockade.

So, it begs the question if the author was aware of the leaflet's aims are they trying to achieve the same aims by reprinting the key points of the leaflet within their article? Although this may seem unlikely given the position of *The Times* regarding the blockade in the December 1918 article it is possible that, over the previous five months, the growing turmoil in Germany combined with worsening food crisis and the continued campaigning of others that the position of *The Times* had changed and that they now supported the lifting of, or at least the lessening of, the blockade. Although it is rare for a newspaper to change its opinion on matters so willingly the sheer number of quotes and arguments printed within the article make it hard to dismiss as a possibility. For example, the article goes on to discuss a leaflet titled "Our Blockade has caused this" the article again quotes directly from the leaflet stating 'All over Europe millions of children are starving to death. We are responsible. how can we stop it? Write to Lloyd George and say you will not stand it, raise the blockade everywhere. Women's International League.'³¹² Again, the author has decided to reprint pretty shocking and condemning claims as to the effects the British blockade was having on the German populace. This time the quote takes it one step further also including not only which group it is supporting these pleas but also providing the readers of *The Times* with advice on how they can also help out these groups by 'writing to Lloyd George'. It is important to remember that the contents of these leaflets had not been approved by the Press Bureau and had been deemed to go against the Defence of the Realm Regulations. Therefore, by reprinting the content of these leaflets and telling others how they can help

³¹² "Raise The Blockade" Leaflets. (16th of May 1919). *Times*, 9. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS153554096/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=80e9f653>

the Women's League, and thus lift the blockade, in the article *The Times* are clearly supporting the Women's group and its beliefs. This could be viewed as further evidence that *The Times* has shifted its position on the blockade. However, it is more likely that it thought the emotive oppositional campaigns and the fact they landed themselves in court were indictment enough of these women's groups and that they did not need further commentary as the *Times* did not carry feature articles on the starvation like the *Guardian*. The quote from the Women's International League again shows how the rhetoric and discussions of blockade had moved away from international law and were again focused on the humanitarian aspects of the blockade.

Overall, this article provides an insight into the ways in which those campaigning for the lifting of the blockade went about trying to publicise their causes and the types of opposition they met from the Government and others involved with publication. However, and possibly more importantly it shows how some newspapers over the course of the blockade's extension had their own opinion of the blockade influenced by what was being reported in the press and as such changed how they themselves reported the blockade's extension. Furthermore, it illustrates how, by May 1919, language surrounding the blockade and appeals for its lifting had shifted away from the concepts of international law, that had dominated pre-war discussions of blockade, towards new rhetoric focused on humanitarianism.

In conclusion, the reporting on the extension of the blockade and its effects during the period of time between the Armistice and the Treaty of Versailles in the press was one of the most indicative ways that extra-parliamentary groups and individuals were able to use the new concepts of humanitarianism, peace, and international sisterhood to argue for

changes to the blockade and British blockade policy. As the changing nature of the press at the end of the war allowed for more open criticism of blockade policy humanitarian groups and women's groups were able to use the press to further their agendas. Following the decline of international law and the end of the war women's groups made use of the press to galvanise support for their new focuses on international sisterhood, pacifism and humanitarianism as a way to keep their groups and political involvement going even after they had been given the vote. This early involvement with the press allows both these women's groups but also the humanitarian groups/charities to become highly astute at using the press in the future as a way to further their campaigns. The arguments made during the extensions period are also indicative of the fall of the influence of international law and the growth of moral pacifism and natural. All sides of the debate have moved away from the early war arguments against Germany and its violations of international law towards appeals against moral injustice and the suffering of others. Following years of disregard towards international law and large-scale propaganda against Germany highlighting its violations of 'a scrap of paper' it was no longer tangible for any pacifist/socialist/women group to use international law as a basis for its international solidarity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, international law was an increasing influence on political planning of the blockade as well as public and political commentary on blockade policy and the blockade itself. However, over the course of the war this influence declined in the face of strategic military needs and the loss of faith in international law following the atrocities of war and was replaced by emerging concepts of humanitarianism centred on international solidarity, sisterhood and peace.

International law played a dominant role in the establishment of blockade law and policy planning during and after the two Hague Conferences and the London Naval Conference. Even after these Conferences and well past the outbreak of war, international law continued to be a dominating influence on the policy of blockade and its running. The personal influence of Grey throughout this period allowed him to constantly subvert attempts to strengthen blockade and disregard international law, however, as the realities of war set in Grey's arguments become irrelevant and eventually led to his removal from office. As the war continued, Germany started to disregard international law as, in the words of British propaganda, a 'scrap of paper' culminating in their unrestricted submarine warfare policy. This policy convinced the British public and political opinion that adhering to international law was no longer necessary and as such calls to strengthen the blockade grew rapidly in the press and extra-parliamentary groups. These calls contributed to the downfall of the Asquith Government and the rise of Lloyd George and were combined with a dramatic transformation and strengthening of the blockade, so much so that by the end of hostilities in 1918 it was the most powerful and effective arm of the military action against Germany. Public and political opinion continued to play an important role after the ending

of hostilities when the blockade was extended until 1919. Public and political opinion both in favour and against the extension was consistently expressed through the nation's newspapers. This consistent use of the press was the most effective way in which campaign groups tried to influence public opinion and effect a change of policy. By this period however, international law had lost most of its influence and in its place were proposed ideas of pacifism, peace, humanitarianism and international sisterhood. As propaganda had made constant examples of the failures of international law to stop Germany and its breaking of international law, these groups had to turn to new ideals on which to base their solidarity.

During both Hague Conferences, the London Naval Conference and within the Declaration of London the influence of international law was near absolute. The growing influence of liberal political and legal thought specifically present within Britain during this period provided grounds for: politicians, women's groups, legal scholars and even liberal Admirals within the Royal Navy to provide constant and often very public commentary on the ever-evolving international law of blockade. The role of public and political opinion continued beyond the establishment of international law exemplified in the London Declaration in 1909 and continued to be a present and important contributing factor in the debates of the London Declaration taking place from 1909 and right through to the outbreak of war. Throughout this period politicians from various parties along with academics and Naval officers made use of newspapers and other sources of publicity in order to try and influence public opinion either in favour of or against the Declaration. As the debates raged the bill to ratify the Declaration was killed in the Lords. As division in Parliament failed to reconcile on the matter as too did public opinion fail to fall definitively one way or the other.

With no clear direction on the matter of blockade, the outbreak of the Great War caught the disjointed British blockade policy by surprise and as such no effective blockade was established in the earlier years of the war. As a result of poor blockade policy combined with mounting British losses at sea public opinion quickly mobilised not only in favour of a blockade but a strong and brutal one. This growth of public opinion but pressure on the Government to not only strengthen its blockade to also go back on its signing of the London Declaration. The prospect of such a radical shift in policy, and the potential to not only anger the United States but to push them to join Germany in the war, created a crisis within the Government between Foreign Secretary Lord Grey, who favoured a policy of weak blockade and US appeasement, and those in Government who recognised the need for a stronger blockade and the appeasement of British public opinion. As propaganda grew more powerful and its depictions of Germany breaking international law revealed how weak the policy was during the war, Grey's arguments became irrelevant and as eventually led to the downfall of the Asquith of Government and the rise of the more militant Lloyd George.

The new Government was more astute to the power of public opinion and as such tried to not only control it through propaganda but also hired the Press Barons into the Government. The end result was an all-powerful blockade that rivalled all other aspects of the military for its effectiveness and power. However, following the end of the war and the contravention of international law, many political groups including pacifists, women's organisations, and socialists needed a new basis for their political activism and they shifted their attention towards ideals of peace centred on humanitarianism and solidarity. This was most exemplified in 1919 when the blockade was extended past the end of hostilities and these groups made astute use of the press to argue both in favour of and in opposition to the extension. These groups were able to masterfully mobilise public opinion over the

issues. This allowed these suffrage groups, whose original aims had mainly been fulfilled at this point with the Representation of the People's Act in 1918, to continue to galvanise support and continue their political involvement.

Overall, the influence of international law pre-war and even during its early years was near absolute. It provided the basis for the works of legal scholars, offer a new point of entry into the political realm for women, and gave hope to politicians committed to avoiding war and retaining peaceful international relations such as Grey. However, the sudden outbreak of war, the failing of international law to prevent it or reconcile opponents, and the eventual disregard of its principals by Germany, created an environment in Britain where it was no longer feasible to support international law as the basis of a new world order. Instead, it gave way for the growth of humanitarianism centred on international solidarity, sisterhood and peace leading to the creation of international charities such as the Save the Children Fund and groups such as the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom that still uphold these ideals over one hundred years later.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

"Raise The Blockade" Leaflets. *The Times*, (16th of May 1919).

A.C. Bell. (1961). *A history of the blockade of Germany and of the countries associated with her in the Great War, Austria-Hungary, Bulgaria, and Turkey, 1914-1918*. H.M. Stationery Office. ART. IV.-THE PEACE CONFERENCE. (15th July 1899). *The Englishwoman's Review: A Journal of Woman's Work*, (CCXLII), 169+. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/DX1901994854/NCUK?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-NCUK&xid=3c7efe45>

British Naval Opinion. *Daily Mail*. (29th of April 1911).

Declaration Concerning the Laws of Naval War. London, 26th of February 1909.

DECLARATION OF LONDON: MR. GIBSON BOWLES AND THE NEW DANGERS. (3rd February 1911). *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/declaration-london/docview/475218296/se-2?accountid=11526>

Debate in Parliament. (4th July 1911). *Financial Times*, 7+. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/HS2301301988/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=9605a1d5>

E. Keble Chatterton (1932). *The Big Blockade*. Hurst & Blackett

FAWCETT. M. G., The Blockade. *The Times*, (2nd of December 1918).

From our Special Correspondent: 'The Peace Conference', *The Times*, 19th of June 1919.

Imperial Parliament. (6th July 1911). *North Devon Journal*, 6. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/IG3225214486/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=5c5b4f17> Naval Agreements. (10th June 1909). *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 2. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/GR3217291832/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=9e1c02ac>

Observer. (1916, April 5). Foreign Office and Blockade. *Daily Mail*, 4. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/EE1865673555/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=f13bf3a9>

Retaliatory Steps in Blockade. (24th July 1915). *Manchester Courier and Lancashire General Advertiser*, 8. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/GR3216970953/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=e25f2ffe>

Sharp, E. (1919, Jul 04). THE BLOCKADE'S EFFECT ON GERMAN CHILDREN: PHYSICAL AND MORAL DETERIORATION. *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)*

Stead, W. T. (1907,). CORRESPONDENCE: BARONESS BURDETT-COUTTS SHORTAGE OF LABOUR IN THE COTTON TRADE THE NEXT HAGUE CONFERENCE AND ITS PROGRAMME PROPOSED CORPORATION TRAMWAYS LORD LOREBURN AND COUNTY JUSTICES. *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/correspondence/docview/474625930/se-2?accountid=11526>

The Blockade. *Daily Mail* (24th of April 1919).

THE DECLARATION OF LONDON: ADVANTAGES GAINED FOREIGN UNDER-SECRETARY'S DEFENCE. (11th February 1911). *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/declaration-london/docview/475222594/se-2?accountid=11526>

The Hague Peace Conferences of 1899 and 1907. A Series of Lectures Delivered before the Johns Hopkins University in the Year 1908. By James Brown Scott. Technical delegate of the United States to the Second Peace Conference at the Hague. In two Volumes. Volume II – Documents. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins Press, 1909. Retrieved from:

https://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/hag99-01.asp

The International Crisis. *Labour Leader*. (1918).

The Submarine Campaign. *The Times*. (8th of February 1917).

THE WOMEN'S LIBERAL FEDERATION: COUNCIL MEETINGS IN LONDON. (7th May 1902). *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* [https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/womens-liberal-federation/docview/474105294/se-](https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/womens-liberal-federation/docview/474105294/se-2?accountid=11526)

[2?accountid=11526](https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/womens-liberal-federation/docview/474105294/se-2?accountid=11526) Westlake, J., Oppenheim, L. (Lassa). (1914). *The collected papers of John Westlake on public international law*. Cambridge [England]: at the University Press.

WESTLAKE., J. (24th December 1908). Holland And Venezuela. *Times*, 4. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/apps/doc/CS67958680/GDCS?u=hudduni&sid=bookmark-GDCS&xid=ed5f9734>

WOMEN AND PEACE: A MEETING IN MANCHESTER A PEACE SOCIETY. (11th October 1906). *The Manchester Guardian (1901-1959)* <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/women-peace/docview/474600193/se-2?accountid=11526>

WOMEN'S LIBERAL FEDERATION: ANNUAL MEETINGS IN HALIFAX SOUTH AFRICA AND EDUCATION. (13th May 1903). *The Manchester Guardian* (1901-1959) <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/womens-liberal-federation/docview/474274767/se-2?accountid=11526>

WOMEN'S LIBERAL FEDERATION: ANNUAL, MEETINGS AT BIRMINGHAM RESOLUTION ON THE WAR. (9th May 1901). *The Manchester Guardian* (1901-1959) <https://www.proquest.com/historical-newspapers/womens-liberal-federation/docview/473963761/se-2?accountid=11526>

Women's Liberal Federation: Annual Conference. (1898). *The Manchester Guardian* (1828-1900)

Secondary Sources

Angela V. John (2003) 'Behind the locked door': Evelyn Sharp, suffragette and rebel journalist', *Women's History Review*, 12:1, 5-13

Barcroft, S. (1989). 'The Hague Peace Conference of 1899'. *Irish Studies in International Affairs*, 3(1), 55-68.

Bew, P. (2008). [Review of *Gladstone: God and politics; British democracy and Irish nationalism, 1876-1906*, by R. Shannon & E. Biagini]. *Irish Historical Studies*, 36(142), 288–289.

BLACKBURN, R. (2011), Laying the Foundations of the Modern Voting System: The Representation of the People Act 1918. *Parliamentary History*, 30: 33-52. Boucher, E. (2011). Cultivating internationalism: Save the Children Fund, public opinion and the meaning of child relief, 1919–24. In Beers L. & Thomas G. (Eds.), *Brave new world: Imperial and*

democratic nation-building in Britain between the wars (pp. 169-188). London: University of London Press.

Boyce, D. Aitken, William Maxwell, first Baron Beaverbrook (1879–1964), newspaper proprietor and politician. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Boyce, D. Harmsworth, Alfred Charles William, Viscount Northcliffe (1865–1922), Journalist and Newspaper Proprietor. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Brock Millman, 'HMG and the War against Dissent, 1914–1918', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 40:3 (2005)

Brock Millman, *Managing Domestic Dissent in First World War Britain* (London: Frank Cass, 2000)

Brown, H. (2004). *The Truest Form of Patriotism': Pacifist Feminism in Britain, 1870-1902*.

Cate Haste, *Keep the Home Fires Burning: Propaganda in the First World War* (London: 1977)

Ceadel, M. (2011). Cecil, (Edgar Algernon) Robert Gascoyne- [known as Lord Robert Cecil], Viscount Cecil of Chelwood (1864–1958), politician and peace campaigner. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Cecil, H., & Liddle, P. (1996). *Facing Armageddon: The First World War experience*.

Cochrane, A., & Matthew, H. Bowles, Thomas Gibson (1841–1922), politician and newspaper proprietor. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Cowman, K. Brown, Nessie Stewart [née Nessie Muspratt] (1864–1958), local politician. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Retrieved 18th February 2022, from

<https://www-oxforddnb->

[com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-59518](https://www-oxforddnb-com.libaccess.hud.ac.uk/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-59518).

Cox, M. E. (2019). *Hunger in War and Peace: Women and Children in Germany, 1914-1924*. Oxford University Press.

Cox, M.E. (2015), Childhood Nutrition in The First World War. *The Economic History Review*, 68: 600-631.

Crawford, E. (1999). *The Women's Suffrage Movement: A reference guide 1866-1928*.

Doenecke, J. D., & Doenecke, J. D. D. (2011). *Nothing Less than War: A New History of America's Entry into World War I*.

Ede, H., & Brodie, M. Harris, (Frederick) Leverton (1864–1926), politician and art collector. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Fahey, D. (2006). Howard [née Stanley], Rosalind Frances, Countess of Carlisle (1845–1921), promoter of women's political rights and of temperance reform. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Fell, A., & Sharp, I. (Eds.). (2007). *The Women's Movement in Wartime: International perspectives, 1914-19*.

Førland, T. (1993). The History of Economic Warfare: International Law, Effectiveness, Strategies. *Journal of Peace Research*, 30(2), 151-162.

Fox, Jo: Making Sense of the War, in: 1914-1918-online. *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, ed. by Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 2014-10-08.

Fyfe, H., & Morris, A. Marlowe, Thomas Henry (1868–1935), journalist. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

GEORGE, J. (1992). Another Chance: Herbert Hoover and World War II Relief. *Diplomatic History*, 16(3), 389-407.

Greg Kennedy (2007) *Intelligence and the Blockade, 1914–17: A Study in Administration, Friction and Command*, *Intelligence and National Security*, 22:5, 699-721

Halpern, P. (2010). Fisher, John Arbuthnot, First Baron Fisher (1841–1920), Naval Officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Hamilton-Edwards, G. (2011). Chair, Sir Dudley Rawson Stratford de (1864–1958), naval officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Henig, R. (1998). *The Weimar Republic 1919-1933*.

Horne, J. (Ed.). (2010). *A Companion to World War I*.

Hurd, A., & Kiste, J. Mountbatten, Louis Alexander, first marquess of Milford Haven [formerly Prince Louis of Battenberg] (1854–1921), naval officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Jan Martin Lemnitzer (2013) 'That Moral League of Nations against the United States': The Origins of the 1856 Declaration of Paris, *The International History Review*, 35:5, 1068-1088,

Jenkins, L. (2020). Gordon [née Marjoribanks], Dame Ishbel Maria, Marchioness of Aberdeen and Temair (1857–1939), philanthropist and vicereine. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Johan den Hertog (2010) The Commission for Relief in Belgium and the Political Diplomatic History of the First World War, *Diplomacy & Statecraft*, 21:4, 593-613

Horne J, 'Remobilizing for "Total War": France and Britain, 1917–1918', in Horne (ed.), *State, Society and Mobilization in Europe during the First World War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 195–211.

Kolb, E., & Kolb, E. (2004). The Weimar Republic.

Kramer, Alan: Naval Blockade (of Germany), in: 1914-1918-online. *International Encyclopedia of the First World War*, ed. by Ute Daniel, Peter Gatrell, Oliver Janz, Heather Jones, Jennifer Keene, Alan Kramer, and Bill Nasson, issued by Freie Universität Berlin, Berlin 2020-01-22.

Lambert, A. Wilson, Sir Arthur Knyvet, third baronet (1842–1921), naval officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Lambert, N. A. (2012). *Planning Armageddon: British Economic Warfare and the First World War*.

Maisel, E. (1989). The Formation of the Department of Overseas Trade, 1919-26. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 24(1), 169-190.

Marion C. Siney (1957). *The Allied Blockade of Germany, 1914-1916*. Michigan: University of Michigan Press.

Marvin Swartz, *The Union of Democratic Control in British Politics during the First World War* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971)

Meredith Hindley (2000) Constructing Allied Humanitarian Policy, *The Journal of Holocaust Education*, 9:2, 77-102

Monger, D. (2012). Introduction. In *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain: The National War Aims Committee and Civilian Morale* (pp. 1-14). Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Monger, D. (2012). The Development of Wartime Propaganda and the Emergence of the NWAC. In *Patriotism and Propaganda in First World War Britain: The National War Aims Committee and Civilian Morale* (pp. 17-36). Liverpool: Liverpool University Press.

Morefield, J. (2005). *Covenants without Swords: Idealist Liberalism and the Spirit of Empire*. PRINCETON; OXFORD: Princeton University Press.

Morgan, K. O. (1981). The rise of socialism. *History Today*, 31, 30.

Morris, A. (2008). Bannerman, Sir Henry Campbell- (1836–1908), Prime Minister. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Nelson, R.L., & Waters, C. (2019). Slow or Spectacular Death: Reconsidering the Legal History of Blockade and Submarines in World War I. *University of Toronto Law Journal* 69(4), 473-496.

Neville, P. Dawson [formerly Robinson], (George) Geoffrey (1874–1944), newspaper editor. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Norton P. (2012) Parliament and Citizens in the United Kingdom, *The Journal of Legislative Studies*, 18:3-4, 403-418,

Osborne, E. W. (2004). *Britain's Economic Blockade of Germany, 1914-1919*.

Otte, T. G. (2011). *The Foreign Office Mind: The making of British foreign policy, 1865–1914*.

Oxford Dictionaries, (2001). *Paris Declaration of 1856*. In *The Oxford Essential Dictionary of the U.S. Military*. Oxford University Press.

Phillip Dehne, The Ministry of Blockade during the First World War and the Demise of Free Trade, *Twentieth Century British History*, Volume 27, Issue 3, September 2016, Pages 333–356

Piller, E. (2016). German Child Distress, US Humanitarian Aid and Revisionist Politics, 1918–24. *Journal of Contemporary History*, 51(3), 453–486.

Pugh, M. (2015). Asquith, Herbert Henry, 1st earl of Oxford and Asquith. In *The Oxford Companion to British History*. Oxford University Press.

Riedi, E. (2013). The Women Pro-Boers: Gender, Peace and the Critique of Empire in the South African War. *Historical Research: The Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, 86(231), 92-115.

Robbins, K. (2011). Grey, Edward, Viscount Grey of Fallodon (1862–1933), politician, countryman, and author. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Robert Mayer (2019) Noncombatant Immunity and the Ethics of Blockade, *Journal of Military Ethics*, 18:1, 2-19

Russell, G., & Fahey, D. (2006). Lawson, Sir Wilfrid, Second Baronet (1829–1906), politician and temperance campaigner. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Sanders, M. (1975). Wellington House and British Propaganda during the First World War. *The Historical Journal*, 18(1), 119-146.

Sanders, M. L., & Taylor, P. M. (1982). *British Propaganda during the First World War, 1914-18*. Macmillan.

Sharp, I. (2013), Feminist Peace Activism 1915 and 2010: Are We Nearly There Yet? *Peace Change*, 38: 155-180.

Sharp, I., & Stibbe, M. (Eds.). (2017). *Women activists between war and peace: Europe, 1918-1923*.

Smith, P. (2011). Cecil, Robert Arthur Talbot Gascoyne-, Third Marquess of Salisbury (1830–1903), Prime Minister. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Stewart, I. (2020). On Recent Developments in the New Historiography of (Neo)Liberalism. *Contemporary European History*, 29(1), 116-124.

SYLVEST, C. (2009). *British liberal internationalism, 1880–1930: Making progress?*

Manchester University Press.

Temple, M. (2008). *The British Press*. McGraw-Hill Open University Press.

Thompson, J. L. (2013). *Politicians, the press, and propaganda: Lord Northcliffe and the great war, 1914-1919*.

Thursfield, H., & Lambert, A. (2004, September 23). Ottley, Sir Charles Langdale (1858–1932), Naval Officer. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Vellacott, J. (1987). Feminist Consciousness and the First World War. *History Workshop*, (23), 81-101.

Weitz, E. (2018). A Troubled Beginning. In *Weimar Germany: Promise and Tragedy, Weimar Centennial Edition* (pp. 7-40). PRINCETON; OXFORD: Princeton University Press.

Wells, N. (2008). Westlake, John (1828–1913), jurist. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

Whalen, R. (1987). *The American Historical Review*, 92(2), 441-442.

Williams, K. (2009). *Read all about it! : A History of the British Newspaper*.